

‘SPORTS,  
AND OTHER SIGNS  
OF CIVILISATION’  
in Colonial Canterbury,  
1850–1890

A thesis submitted  
in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements  
for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in History  
in the University of Canterbury

by

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University of Canterbury  
2002

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# ***ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS THESIS***

## **Data Bases**

*Cyclopedia, Canterbury: Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Volume III, Cyclopedia Company, Wellington, 1903.*

Electoral Rolls: *New Zealand Electoral Rolls*

Freeholders Return: *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand, 1882*

MDB: Macdonald Dictionary of Biography, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch

NZPD: *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*

AJHR: *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives*

## **Newspapers**

Press: *The Christchurch Press*

LT: *Lyttelton Times*

NZH *New Zealand Herald*

WP: *Weekly Press*

ODT: *Otago Daily Times*

## **History Journals**

NZJH: *New Zealand Journal of History*

IJHS: *International Journal of the History of Sport*

## **Sports Clubs**

C.R.C.: Canterbury Rowing Club

U.R.C.: Union Rowing Club

C.B.C.: Cure Boating Club

R.R.C.: Railway Rowing Club

C.A.A.C.: Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club

S.C.A.A.C.: South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club

C.T.A.C.: Canterbury Tradesmen's Athletic Club

T.T.A.A.C.: Timaru Tradesmen's Amateur Athletic Club

U.C.C.C.: United Canterbury Cricket Club

C.F.C.: Christchurch Football Club

S.C.F.C.: South Canterbury Football Club

## **Sports Associations**

N.Z.A.R.A.: New Zealand Rowing Association

N.Z.A.A.A.: New Zealand Amateur Athletic Association

C.C.A.: Canterbury Cricket Association

R.F.U.: Rugby Football Union (England)

C.R.F.U.: Canterbury Rugby Football Union

S.C.R.F.U.: South Canterbury Rugby Football Union

## **Others**

C.C.S.: Canterbury Caledonian Society

M.U.I.O.O.F.: Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows

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## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

During the process of writing this thesis I have accumulated a great many debts, both personal and professional. Max Broadbent and the staff of the Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, have always managed to accommodate my requests for resources and assistance, even though these were often verging on the unreasonable. For your forbearance, many thanks. I am also particularly grateful to Jo-Anne Smith, Josie Laing and their colleagues at the Library of the Canterbury Museum, for their unfailing good humour and for allowing me to have access to the collections under their care outside the normal hours of operation on so many occasions. I must also pay tribute to the staff at the South Canterbury Museum in Timaru, who did their utmost to help me while labouring under trying circumstances. The staff at the Kaiapoi District Historical Society Museum in Kaiapoi, all of whom are part-time volunteers motivated only by the desire to preserve the historical record of the region in which they have spent most of their lives, were unstinting in their efforts to provide me with information, tea and biscuits. It was, as well, my great pleasure to spend several days searching through the archives of the Canterbury Caledonian Society in Christchurch, who have constructed a repository which is a model for all other voluntary and sporting organisations who wish to preserve their own records.

Essential financial assistance was provided by the University of Canterbury, which generously awarded me a Doctoral Scholarship, and the Department of History, University of Canterbury, which defrayed most of the costs of travel and research associated with the thesis. My thanks also to Philip Jane and Tim O'Sullivan for the assistance which they rendered me with the practicalities involved in the research for this thesis.

Every thesis writer incurs a greater range of intellectual debts than he or she can recall. However, I shall make an attempt to mention those who have assisted me in this regard. Bob Kirk, Andrew Abel, Peter Gough and the others with whom I served on the Research Committee of the University of Canterbury all contributed to the development of whatever critical faculty I might possess, even though they may not be aware of it. Greg Ryan, Camilla Obel, Katie

Pickles, Phil Ferguson and Philippa Mein Smith all furnished useful and interesting references and ideas. Kon, Eleanor, Leanne, Tania, Diana, Annie, Andrew, Brian, Roy, Jan, Megan, Maatje, and Richard and Margaret all performed a crucial role at different times - they kept me laughing and listened to me complain. You cannot imagine how much that meant to me.

My sincere thanks to John O'Hara and, again, Richard Cashman for accepting parts of this thesis for publication. I would also like to give special thanks to Vincent O'Sullivan and Brad Patterson at the Stout Research Centre at Victoria University, Wellington, for the tremendous support which they give to the writing of New Zealand history.

Four other people have earned my undying gratitude. The first is Vaughan Wood, who has shown me the meaning of courage and perseverance in the face of adversity. It is difficult to find the words to express my gratitude to my two supervisors, Drs Chris Connolly and Len Richardson. They have been unfailingly cheerful when listening to my fears and uncertainties, and when correcting my errors and answering my occasionally obtuse queries. Without their superb advice, sound judgement and often inspired and insightful criticism this thesis would contain infinitely more faults than it does.

Finally, I wish to thank my wife, Dr Toby Harfield. When I try to think of ways in which to express my appreciation for the help she has given me, I am truly lost for words. So I will say only that she has given me the strongest possible material, intellectual and spiritual support in the struggle to complete this study. Writing a thesis is seldom a very pleasant business, but she has made the process as near to enjoyable as it is possible to get.

Segments of this thesis have previously appeared in print; parts of Chapters One and Four have been published as "Impossibly Elitist And Snobbish": Amateurism in Canterbury,

1850-1880: The Examples of Aquatics and Athletics,' *Bulletin of the Australasian Society for Sports History*, No. 31, December 1999, pp.6-12; part of Chapter One has been published as 'Sport, Class and Community in Canterbury, 1850-1880: The Evidence From Rowing', in B. Patterson (ed.), *Sport, Society & Culture in New Zealand*, Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, 1999, pp.157-64; an earlier version of Chapter Three has been published as "'Stupid, Uninteresting and Inhuman': Pedestrianism in Canterbury, 1860-1885', *Sporting Traditions*, Volume 18, Number 1, November 2001, pp.43-55.

## ***ABSTRACT***

This thesis explores the development of sport in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890 and the significance of a number of factors, including class, in that process. Each province in New Zealand developed in relative isolation and evolved its own distinct identity prior to the 1880s. Consequently, this study examines the evolution of sport within a single province, rather than throughout the entire colony. Several arguments will be advanced in the dissertation. Evidence shows that sport was an activity in which a high proportion of the population of the province were involved on some basis. Although this characteristic was apparent in almost every form of sporting endeavour, it was particularly noticeable in rowing and certain organisational forms of athletics. Various factors also facilitated the involvement, to a limited extent, of Maori and the female section of the settler population in these two pursuits. The development of sport was effected by improvements in the infrastructure of the province and may, in turn, have exerted some influence over the manner in which that infrastructure evolved. The steady expansion of the system of railways enabled growing numbers of people to travel around Canterbury to sporting events, and this increasing volume of passenger traffic apparently proved sufficiently lucrative to induce changes in the way local railways were managed. Moreover, contrary to the opinions which dominate the historiography, sport in Canterbury was characterised by a high degree of organisation in matters of finance and management. One particularly significant point, which will be constantly reiterated throughout the thesis, is that sport in Canterbury was dominated until the mid-1880s by the rural and urban elites and by the middling classes. The working classes participated in sporting activities which took the form of annual public festivities from the late 1860s and, to an increasing extent after 1880, in those conducted through formally constituted clubs, particularly rowing and rugby football. The last, but by no means least, of the arguments advanced in this thesis is that sport was instrumental in fostering a sense of communal identity in Canterbury. The primary vehicle for the creation of this sentiment was rugby football. Sport, in almost all of its manifestations and at all stages of its development, was a social activity of the greatest significance in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890.

Illustration I

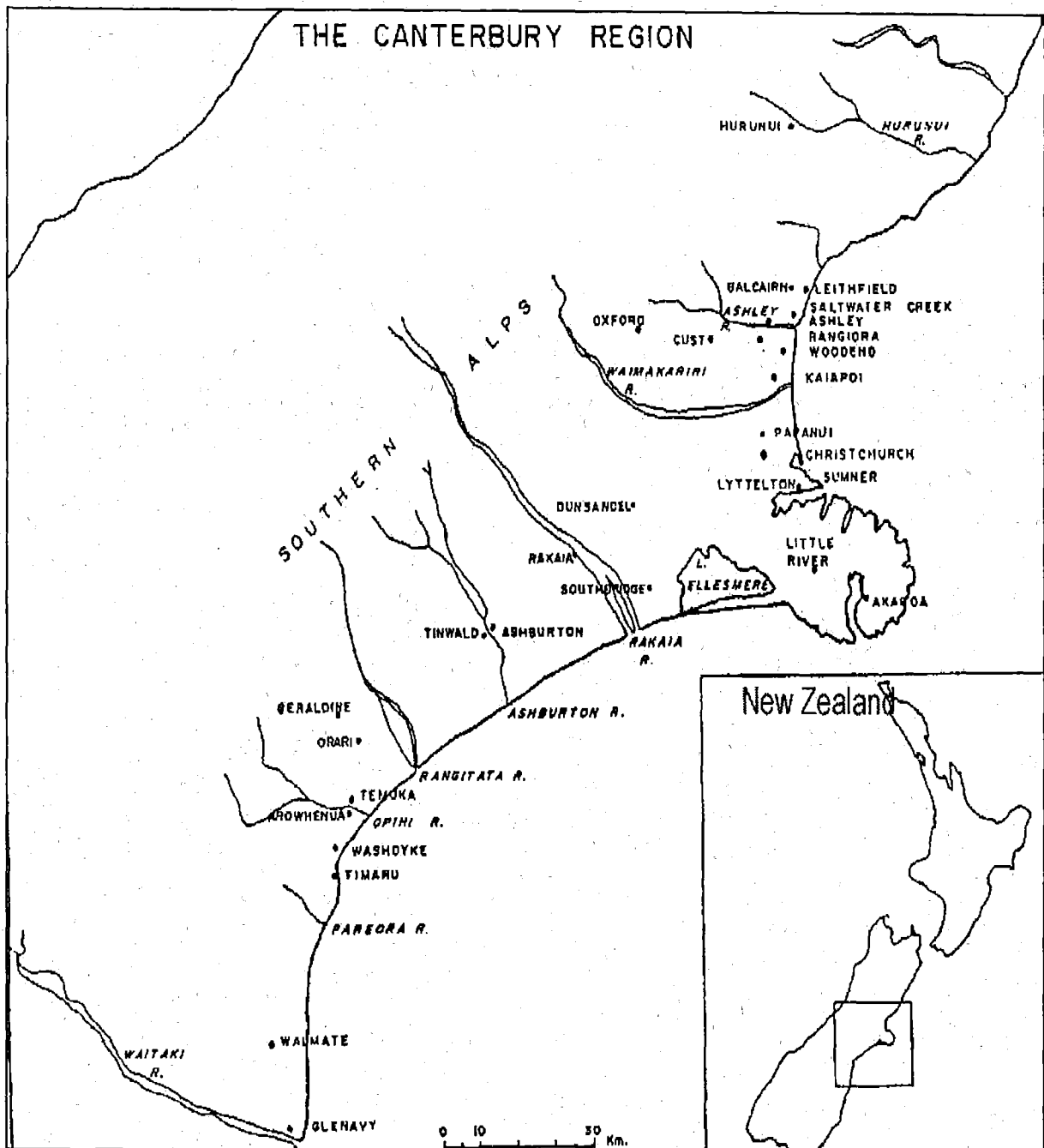


Illustration II

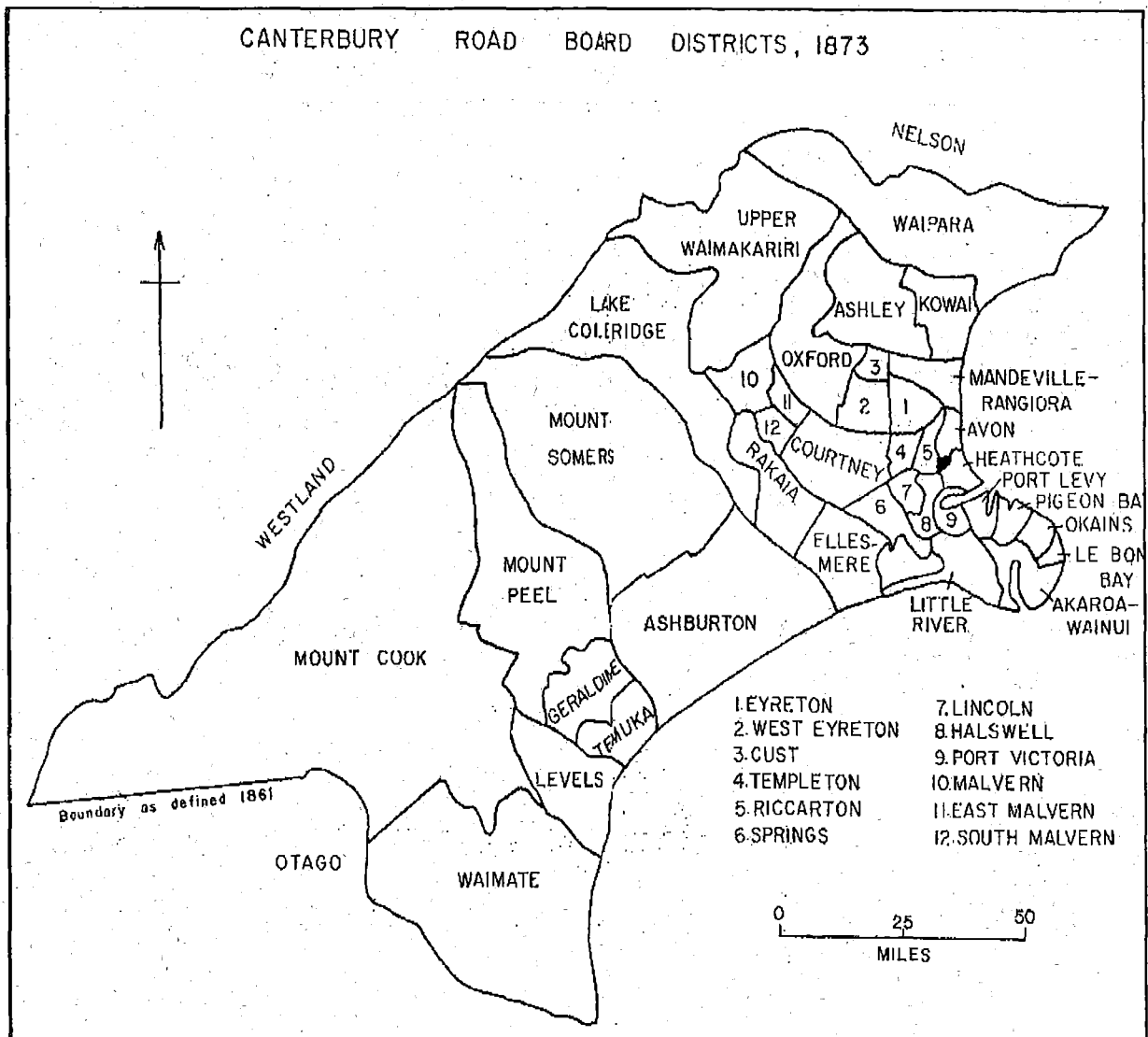
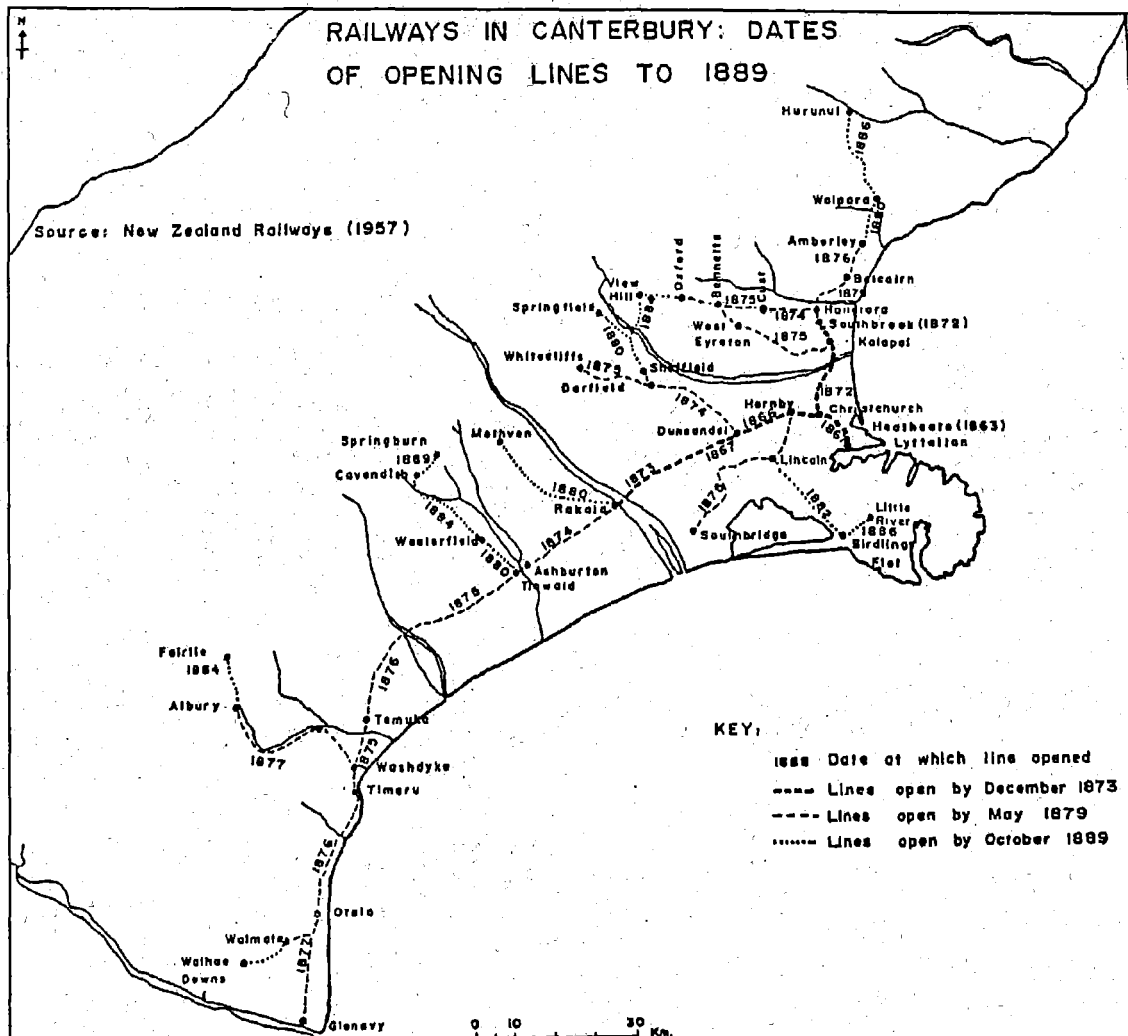


Illustration III





*PREFACE:*  
*THE LOST DUTCHMAN GOLDMINE*

While this thesis was in an early stage of its development I attended a book launch at which I met an author who had produced a history of a leading educational institution in Canterbury. ‘What are you doing your PhD on?’, he inquired pleasantly. Not wanting to get too heavily into detail, I answered that ‘It’s on sport in Canterbury before 1890.’ He looked genuinely puzzled. ‘Was there any?’, he asked. I assured him that there was, but he seemed unconvinced. ‘Well, good luck’, he said, with a slightly apologetic shrug of his shoulders. His facial expression and tone of voice were those which a sympathetic individual might reserve for the harmless eccentrics who seek the ‘Lost Dutchman’ goldmine. The dissertation which follows is my ‘Lost Dutchman’ goldmine.

This thesis has its origins in a conversation I had with the distinguished social historian Dr Len Richardson late in 1996. I had submitted my MA thesis on the Anglo-Welsh rugby tour of New Zealand in 1908 only a few months earlier, and was eager to undertake extended research on sport during the Colonial period. However, I had no real idea of the variety of organised sports in which the inhabitants of New Zealand were engaged prior to 1890, the scale on which these activities were conducted, or the nature of the sources available.

Preliminary research conducted during the first few weeks of 1997 provided strong evidence that the range of sports being played throughout New Zealand was considerable by 1860 and increased steadily thereafter. Indeed, so widespread had organised sport become by the early 1870s that the impracticality of attempting a study which encompassed the entire Colony during the second half of the nineteenth century rapidly became apparent. Moreover, I

was increasingly convinced by the nature of the evidence which emerged that, as had been observed the historical geographer Alan Grey in 1994, 'six colonies' each with its own distinct identity existed within New Zealand throughout most of the Colonial period.<sup>1</sup>

I was equally persuaded in favour of a 'regionalised' study by the opinions of other scholars. Erik Olssen notes that 'Until quite recently historians tended to think in terms of broad processes, going on uniformly across the whole country, which could be illustrated by research into any area'. Consequently, the work produced by academic historians rested on the 'central assumption ... that the nation's development was a single story best conceptualized in terms of uniform evolutionary progress.' However, Olssen observes that J. G. A. Pocock long ago noted the importance of 'local variations in environment and culture' to 'migrants of Anglo-Celtic origin when the major waves departed from Britain for the South Seas'<sup>2</sup> during the mid- and late nineteenth century. Olssen claims that, 'Within New Zealand, local differences were also important' because most people, whether immigrants or their native-born offspring, 'lived out their lives in local environments and thought of themselves in local or provincial terms.'<sup>3</sup> Thus, in an attempt to contain the scope of the thesis within reasonable bounds and avoid the complexities which would inevitably arise in a study which examined sport within several different socio-economic and political contexts, I decided to limit the focus of my thesis to the Province of Canterbury.

It was initially my intention to undertake a comprehensive study of all the organised sport of any significance in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. However, the great weight of

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<sup>1</sup> A. Grey, *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 1994, pp.198-201.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. A. Pocock, 'British History: A Plea for a New Subject', *NZJH*, Vol.8, No.1, April 1974, pp.3-21 is quoted in E. Olssen, 'Where To From Here?: Reflections on the Twentieth-Century Historiography of Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', *NZJH*, Vol.26, No.1, April 1992, pp.67-8.

<sup>3</sup> Olssen, 'Where To From Here?', pp.67-8.

available evidence soon forced me to make a rational selection and the number was reduced to five. I decided to concentrate my energies on those sports in which competition was based on human endeavour, rather than the performances of animals. Even the sport of horse-racing, which was of great importance in Canterbury, had to be eschewed. It is a topic so large and rich that it could not be dealt with satisfactorily in a thesis which covers so many sports and is restricted in its chronological scope. Moreover, the omission is not unduly significant because preliminary research has indicated that a study of racing would confirm, rather than contradict, the argument propounded in the thesis regarding the elite origins of sport in Canterbury. I chose sports which had appeared within five years of the settlement having been established and endured thereafter, and which the evidence indicated might have been the 'most popular and best organised'.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the activities examined are rowing, athletics, ploughing matches, cricket and football.

This thesis is arranged by individual sports. To have organised the work around a series of specific themes or to have fabricated a simple chronology of events would have resulted in discontinuity, fragmentation, confusion and excessive repetition. Moreover, I found that the themes upon which narratives are often constructed in British and Australian literatures, such as amateurism or the dramatic shifts which occurred when sports were transferred from rural to urban environments, were not always so significant in Canterbury. By adopting a structure that perhaps differs slightly from the norm, I have been able to illustrate with greater clarity the degree to which each of the nominated sports tended to act as a means of increasing social cohesion.

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<sup>4</sup> M. A. E. Hammer, "Something Else in the World to Live For": Sport and the Physical Emancipation of Women and Girls in Auckland, 1880-1920', unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1990, p.v.

The dates 1850 and 1890 were chosen after careful consideration. The Canterbury Settlement was established in December 1850, and changes which were occurring in the organisation of sport in New Zealand by 1890 marked the end of an era in all the provinces. The establishment of such bodies as the New Zealand Amateur Athletic and Amateur Rowing Associations in 1887, and the New Zealand Rugby Football Union in 1892, signified that by about 1890 the ultimate control over sport in Canterbury was increasingly being ceded to people outside the Province.

A word is necessary about the title of the thesis. This has its origins in a speech given at an annual dinner of a leading athletic club in Canterbury which echoes the claim advanced by Eric Dunning that, after the seventeenth century, sport in England underwent a 'revolution'. In parallel with the emergence in politics of 'less violent ways of conducting struggles ... than had previously been the case', writes Dunning, 'the initial development of modern sport involved a transformation in the direction of greater civilization.' Sports such as

boxing, fox-hunting, soccer and rugby, as they developed in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, came to embody the elimination of some forms of physical violence and the general demand that participants should exercise stricter self-control over the violent and aggressive impulses for which sport serves as a central avenue of expression and which, in any case, are always liable to be aroused in a competitive activity.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, organised sport was regarded by any 'Englishman' as one of the principal signs of 'civilization'.

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<sup>5</sup> E. Dunning, 'Sociological Reflections on Sport, Violence and Civilization', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, Vol.25, No.1, (1990) pp.71, 74.

## *INTRODUCTION*

While addressing the annual dinner of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club in May 1879, the 'Honorable Mr Clifford ... expressed the astonishment with which, having only just arrived from England, he had found the colony so far advanced in sports, and other signs of civilisation.'<sup>1</sup> The object of this study is to provide readers with an understanding of why Mr Clifford was so 'astonished'.

This thesis discusses the importance and the evolution of sport in the history of Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. A great deal of material has been produced on sport in New Zealand, but the bulk of this work is taken up with 'banal description of the lives and deeds of local worthies'<sup>2</sup> and is dedicated, as Richard Holt has noted of much British sporting literature, to 'praising a few famous men and compiling records'.<sup>3</sup> Although much attention has been paid by scholars to the politics, geography, economics and social history of Canterbury, relatively little effort has been devoted to examining the subject of sport in Canterbury. The only advanced studies of local sport completed to date are essays on the evolution of rugby football in the Province and portions of other works relating to cricket, yachting and rowing as they developed throughout New Zealand during the Colonial period.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> TH, 9 May 1879.

<sup>2</sup> M. Fairburn, 'Local Community or Atomized Society?', NZJH, Vol.16, No.2, October 1982, p.148.

<sup>3</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> P. Murray, 'The Origins and Development of Rugby in Christchurch, 1860-1885', unpublished MA extended essay, University of Canterbury, 1983; J. Corkin, 'New Zealand Yacht Racing and its Social Context, 1840-1960,' M.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996; M. Crotty, 'Rowing in New Zealand to 1914: The Development of an Old World Sport in a New World Setting,' B.A. (Hons) History Research Project, University of Canterbury, 1992; G. Ryan, 'Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps': The Making of New Zealand Cricket, 1832-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996; S. Oldham, 'Rugby in the model borough : the Sydenham Football Club, 1882-1918', unpublished B.A. (Hons) Research Essay, University of Canterbury, 1995.

This is the first scholarly work in which several activities have been studied in depth with the express purpose of providing an account of the development of sport in colonial Canterbury.

Sporting activity does not occur in a void, but within geographic, economic, demographic and social contexts which can facilitate or hinder its development. The geography of the Province imposed few physical constraints on the development of sport, in terms of both enhanced communication and the construction of facilities. The original settlement was located on the edge of the alluvial Canterbury Plain. Apart from a range of native grasses, the vegetation on the plain consisted principally of a few 'small patches of forest'.<sup>5</sup> A number of large swamps also existed in low-lying coastal areas, including much of the site of the city of Christchurch.<sup>6</sup> Although the forests and wetlands were regarded by early settlers primarily as a 'nuisance', most of the swamplands were drained 'by prodigious manual labour' and sawyers soon cut out the woodlands so effectively that they 'disappeared almost completely from the landscape.'<sup>7</sup>

The rivers which created the plain initially constituted a major physical obstacle to development during the early period of settlement. The heaviest concentration of population in the Province resided on the floodplain of the Waimakariri River which extended from Kaiapoi in the north, through Christchurch, to Halswell and Lake Ellesmere in the south. The Waimakariri was prone to change its course 'when in spate',<sup>8</sup> sometimes with dire consequences. Other rivers in the Province were also dangerous. After crossing a 'frail-looking

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<sup>5</sup> G. Jobberns, 'The Land of Canterbury', in J. Hight and C. R. Straubel, eds, *A History of Canterbury, Volume I: To 1854*, Canterbury Centennial Association and Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, Christchurch, 1957, pp.2-3.

<sup>6</sup> E. Pawson, 'Confronting Nature', in J. Cookson and G. Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards A City Biography, 1850-2000*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000, pp.72-5.

<sup>7</sup> Jobberns, 'The Land of Canterbury', pp.2-3.

<sup>8</sup> Pawson, 'Confronting Nature', pp.72-5.

bridge' over the swollen Rakaia in 1873, Anthony Trollope wrote that 'The whole thing looked like certain death'.<sup>9</sup>

However, the challenges posed by rivers to 'progress' in Canterbury were eventually overcome. Permanent railway bridges were built over the Waimakariri in September 1872 and the Rakaia in June 1873, thereby enabling regular and reliable communication between Christchurch and the hinterland of the province.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the geography of Canterbury was almost entirely without features which were inherently inimical to the development of sport, and the few potentially serious physical barriers had been largely surmounted by the early 1870s.

As implied above, improvements in the communications infrastructure, particularly the rapidly expanding and comprehensive network of railways, facilitated the growth of sport in Canterbury. By October 1889 the rail network extended along the east coast of the Province, and inland for up to thirty miles at several points.<sup>11</sup> Though many historians have commented on the consequences for sport in England of the rapid expansion of the system of railways,<sup>12</sup> no attention had been paid by scholars to the impact of rail transport on sporting activity in colonial New Zealand. It will be made clear during the course of this study that railways were of great significance for the development of sport in Canterbury.

Economic development provided the resources necessary for the development of sport. The prosperity of the Province, especially after 1861, depended primarily on the production of

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<sup>9</sup> A. Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand in Two Volumes. Vol. II*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1873, pp.367-8.

<sup>10</sup> W. A. Pierre, *Canterbury Provincial Railways: Genesis of the N.Z.R. System*, The New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society Inc., Wellington, 1964, pp.82, 175.

<sup>11</sup> A. Grey, *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 1994, pp.26-7.

<sup>12</sup> J. M. Golby and A. W. Purdue, *The Civilisation of the Crowd: Popular Culture in England, 1750-1900*, Shocken Books, New York, 1985, pp.115, 135-8; N. Wigglesworth, *The Evolution of English Sport*, Frank Cass and Company Limited,

agricultural commodities. 'Farmers' staples', writes Trevor Burnard, 'were wool and grain, most of which was exported to the British market, as was meat after the beginning of refrigeration in 1882.'<sup>13</sup> The returns received by agriculturalists for this produce provided the cash required to finance such events as rural sports meetings, as well as cricket and football clubs from the mid-1870s, in rural districts throughout the Province. The necessary use of the plough to bring 1.3 million acres of tussock and scrub into productive use by 1881<sup>14</sup> also provided the impetus for the establishment of ploughing matches, which may in turn have provided a platform for the development of improved technologies and techniques to be used in ploughing in Canterbury.

The prosperity flowing from economic development may also have facilitated the expansion of sporting activity in the foremost urban centre of the Province. Christchurch became both a generator of capital and reservoir of accumulated wealth. The metropolis functioned as a financial, processing and communications centre, as well as a market and the principal port, for the agriculturalists of the hinterland. Moreover, the people of the city created a great deal of economic activity through their provision of goods and services to one another and to 'more distant rural dwellers'.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the economic development of Canterbury from 1851 endowed Christchurch with a concentration of money, labour and organisational skills which facilitated the creation and maintenance of major sporting events, administrative bodies and clubs. Consequently, by the mid-1860s the city possessed the resources necessary

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London, 1996, p.6; H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c.1780-1880*, Croom Helm Ltd., London, 1980, pp.157-8, 178.

<sup>13</sup> T. Burnard, 'An Artisanal Town - The Economic Sinews of Christchurch', in J. Cookson and G. Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards A City Biography, 1850-2000*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000, p.116; P. Holland and R. Hargreaves, 'Tussock Into Wool', in R. G. Cant and R. Kirkpatrick, eds, *Rural Canterbury: celebrating its history*, Daphne Brassell Associates and Lincoln University Press, 2001, p.55; W. H. Scotter, 'Canterbury, 1857-68: The Superintendencies of W. S. Moorhouse (1857-63; 1866-8) and Samuel Bealey (1863-6)', in W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II: General History, 1854-76 and Cultural Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1971, pp.82-4, 232-3, 183-4; G. Wynn and G. Cant, 'The Bonanza Wheat Boom', in R. G. Cant and R. Kirkpatrick, eds, *Rural Canterbury: celebrating its history*, Daphne Brassell Associates and Lincoln University Press, 2001, pp.63-7.

<sup>14</sup> Wynn and Cant, 'The Bonanza Wheat Boom', p.68.



to inaugurate and sustain substantial regattas and athletic sports meetings and, from the early 1870s, growing numbers of properly constituted clubs devoted to cricket and football and even amateur athletics.

The only factor which significantly inhibited the growth of organised sport in Canterbury was the Long Depression, which reached the Province early in 1879 and lingered until at least the mid-1890s. This economic slump, which was 'part of a great fall in prices, interest rates and profits which affected the western business world from 1875 to 1895',<sup>16</sup> affected all sectors of the community at different times. C. G. F. Simkin notes that farmers were 'hard hit, particularly those who had bought land at the grossly inflated values' which prevailed during the Land Boom of the later 1870s. Between 1882 and 1890 the price paid in London for wool exported from Canterbury fell from 10 3/4d to 6 3/4d per pound, and that for wheat per bushel from 4s to 2s 6d.<sup>17</sup> Such prices rendered the export of wheat to the British market uneconomic. However, the agriculturalists were not alone in their suffering. The rates of unemployment and underemployment among the labour forces in the urban centres of the Province appear to have risen dramatically from mid-1879. Moreover, statistical evidence indicates that after 1884 the wage rates for most categories of labour declined and the prices of many essential commodities increased significantly.<sup>18</sup>

The difficulties confronting Canterbury were compounded during the late 1880s when the Bank of New Zealand, the National Bank, various British and Australian financial institutions and many private individuals withdrew millions of pounds from the stagnant New

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<sup>15</sup> Burnard, 'An Artisanal Town,' pp.116-9.

<sup>16</sup> Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1965, p.59.

<sup>17</sup> C. G. F. Simkin, *The Instability of a Dependent Economy: Economic Fluctuations in New Zealand, 1840-1914*, Oxford University Press, London, 1951, pp.163, 165, 167.

Zealand economy and invested their money in other markets which showed better prospects. While it is true that farming continued 'upon a large scale'<sup>19</sup> and that the greater portion of the workforce could obtain regular employment, the amount of disposable income available in the Province for such purposes as financing sporting activities almost certainly decreased after the early 1880s.<sup>20</sup>

However, it was the settlers who ultimately determined how sport would evolve in the Province. Thus, it is important to discuss briefly the origins of the Canterbury Settlement, the types of people who emigrated, the essentially English values and beliefs which they carried to the new colony, and the extent to which some of these convictions may have predisposed the colonists to organise sporting activities.

The process of settlement continued practically unhindered in Canterbury due to favorable geography and an absence of open hostilities between the settlers and the Native population, like those which flared in Taranaki and the Waikato. The data contained in Table 1 reveals that the population of the province, and of Christchurch as its principal centre, increased steadily after 1860 and with particular rapidity during the 'Vogérite Boom' of the 1870s.

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<sup>18</sup> *Statistics of New Zealand*, 'Average Rates of Wages in each Provincial District During the Year', 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890; 'Average Prices of Live Stock, Provisions, &c., in each Provincial District of New Zealand during the Year', 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1890.

<sup>19</sup> ODT 17 May 1879.

<sup>20</sup> W. J. Gardner, 'A Colonial Economy', in G. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992, pp.73, 75; Simkin, *The Instability of a Dependent Economy*, pp.165-6; D. Thorns and C. Sedgwick, *Understanding Aotearoa/New Zealand: Historical Statistics*, The Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1997, p.64; M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society, 1850-1900*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1989, pp.106-7.

**TABLE 1**  
**POPULATION OF CHRISTCHURCH AND CANTERBURY 1851-1891<sup>21</sup>**

YEAR	CHRISTCHURCH	CANTERBURY
1851	1,189	3,273
1861	7,505	16,090
1871	12,466	46,934
1881	32,316	112,424
1891	47,846	128,663

Following a visit to Canterbury in 1872, Anthony Trollope wrote that ‘The community thrive but it did not thrive by reliance on the theory on which it was founded.’<sup>22</sup> Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the social reformer of the early nineteenth century, devised the ‘Wakefield System’ of colonisation as a means of dealing with the ostensible threat to ‘social stability’ posed by the problem of overcrowding in Britain. ‘The simplicity of the Wakefield scheme’, notes John Daly, ‘was that it provided funds for the emigration of labourers through the sale of Colonial ‘Waste Lands’.’<sup>23</sup> The Canterbury Settlement was the last and, as L. C. Webb has argued, the most successful of his schemes.<sup>24</sup>

Olssen and other historians have shown that the New Zealand Company and its subsidiaries, including the Canterbury Association, ‘intended to transplant to New Zealand a vertical slice of eighteenth century rural England (including squires, yeoman farmers, and deferential agricultural labourers).’<sup>25</sup> Grafted on to the scheme for the settlement of Canterbury was a plan by John Robert Godley to create a diocesan establishment complete

<sup>21</sup> Graham, ‘Settler Society’, p.117; K. Pickens, ‘Canterbury 1851-1881: Demography and Mobility, A Comparative Study’, unpublished PhD thesis, Washington University, 1976; C. G. F. Simkin, ed., ‘Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony Period, 1840-1852’, University of New Zealand, Wellington, 1954, Table 3, p.11; *Statistics of New Zealand*, 1864; *Census of New Zealand*, 1871, 1881, 1891.

<sup>22</sup> Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand in Two Volumes*, p.363.

<sup>23</sup> J. Daly, *Elysian Fields: Sport, Class and Community in Colonial South Australia, 1836-1890*, John A. Daly, Adelaide, 1982, p.6.

<sup>24</sup> L. C. Webb, ‘The Canterbury Association and Its Settlement’, in J. Hight and C. R. Straubel, eds, *A History of Canterbury, Volume I: To 1854*, Canterbury Centennial Association and Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, Christchurch, 1957, pp.228-33.

<sup>25</sup> Olssen, ‘Social Class in Nineteenth Century New Zealand’, p.24.

with Bishop, cathedral chapter and clergy, as well as denominational schools and a College.<sup>26</sup> However, while Canterbury was 'undoubtedly the best organised and planned of the Wakefield settlements' and became the means of transplanting 'an unprecedented concentration of middle class respectability'<sup>27</sup> to New Zealand, it did not fulfil the ambitions of its promoters.

Most of the migrants recruited by the various branches of the Wakefield enterprise were artisans, domestics, unskilled urban working men, and agricultural labourers.<sup>28</sup> Further, the great majority of those who took advantage of the assisted immigration schemes operated by the Provincial and General governments until the late 1880s were drawn from the same groups.<sup>29</sup> Thus, 'in composition and outlook', colonial Canterbury was 'overwhelmingly a working settlers' society.'<sup>30</sup> Few members of the landed 'gentry' could be induced to relocate themselves to New Zealand. Nevertheless, a considerable number of 'well-bred, well-to-do, and well-educated men and women migrated to the Antipodes in quest of better fortune, adventure, peace of mind, and a nostalgic vision of a more perfect England.'<sup>31</sup>

The colonists created a polity which bore the clear imprint of the socio-political milieu from which they originated.<sup>32</sup> Though distinctions between classes sharpened in

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<sup>26</sup> Webb, 'The Canterbury Association and Its Settlement' pp.135-233; The Province remains predominately Anglican. This hegemony was not impeded by a large number of Dissenters as found in Nelson or in South Australia, nor by Presbyterian numbers found in Otago; see Daly, *Elysian Fields* for a discussion of the effects of religion on the development of South Australia; Simkin, ed., 'Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony Period, 1840-1852', *Statistics of New Zealand*, 1864; *Census of New Zealand*, 1871, 1881, 1891.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p.123.

<sup>28</sup> E. Olssen, 'Social Class in Nineteenth Century New Zealand,' in D. Pitt, *Social Class in New Zealand*, Longman Paul, Auckland, 1977, p.25.

<sup>29</sup> R. H. Silcock, 'Immigration into Canterbury under the Provincial Government', unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1963, pp.184-7; J. Graham, 'Settler Society', in G. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992, p.116.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p.116.

<sup>31</sup> Olssen, 'Social Class in Nineteenth Century New Zealand', p.25.

<sup>32</sup> W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II: General History, 1854-76 and Cultural Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1971, pp.21-3, 83-4.

Victorian Britain during and after the period of rapid industrialisation, overt social conflict was minimal and 'the new society was increasingly integrated into an effectively functioning whole'.<sup>33</sup> Liberalism was the social doctrine which came to predominate in Britain during the mid-Victorian era.<sup>34</sup> The existence in Britain during this period of an ardent belief in a 'grand alliance of productive interests that largely transcended the antagonisms of class' ensured that 'values and aspirations became increasingly convergent across society' until the late 1880s.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the immigrants who arrived in Colonial Canterbury from Britain between the late 1850s and 1890 were drawn from a society in which the 'philosophical omnipotence' of liberalism ensured that at least 'the more overt forms of class conflict' were lacking.<sup>36</sup>

The social divisions and hierarchy which had existed in Britain prior to embarkation between the relatively affluent minority who sailed as 'cabin-class' passengers and the mass of immigrants, who travelled below decks in steerage, persisted throughout the voyage and were among the items of cultural baggage 'imported' into the new colonial environment.<sup>37</sup> 'From the outset', claims Graham, 'distinctions of birth, education, income, and occupation were acknowledged.' Positions of leadership in colonial society devolved primarily upon those who had 'brought their status with them' or, later, upon those who 'acquired it through early possession of land' or through the accumulation of wealth.<sup>38</sup> Thus, 'men of rank' took the lead in organising sports, as in other fields of activity.

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<sup>33</sup> A. J. Reid, *Social Classes and Social Relations in Britain, 1850-1914*, Macmillan Education Limited, Basingstoke, 1992, p.9.

<sup>34</sup> P. Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1848-1914*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, pp.56, 59.

<sup>35</sup> E. F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860-1880*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, pp.379-425.

<sup>36</sup> G. Wright, 'The Petty Bourgeoisie in Colonial Canterbury: A Study of the Canterbury Working Man's Protection and Mutual Improvement Association (1865-66), and the Canterbury Freehold Land Society (1866-70)', unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1998, p.72; E. Dunning and K. Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, Price Milburn & Co. Ltd., Wellington, 1979, p.140.

<sup>37</sup> Graham, 'Settler Society', p.134; Olssen, 'Social Class in Nineteenth Century New Zealand', p.25.

Some comment is in order regarding the classes which evolved in colonial Canterbury and the relationships which existed between them. Pragmatism dictated that class be defined in this thesis according to occupation.<sup>39</sup> The colonists who migrated to New Zealand brought with them 'a long tradition of defining men by their producer roles', and continued the practise when compiling the official records of the time.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the most reliable way of categorising individuals within this thesis is by occupation.

At the pinnacle of the social hierarchy were the 'elites', who can effectively be divided into two groups. The rural elite consisted principally of those who owned or leased large tracts of land on which they farmed sheep by the thousands, and a smaller number of others who engaged in the farming of crops on a large scale. This section of the population were the economic backbone of colonial Canterbury, exporting wool and wheat worth millions of pounds to markets in London by 1870. The rural elite did not have the high status of the English Gentry, and never developed a paternalistic role.

The urban elite can, in turn, be subdivided into two groups. The first was a combination of senior functionaries in the various departments of the General, Provincial or local governments, prosperous merchants and the managers of substantial commercial or financial enterprises. The second cluster consisted of professionals, such as the prominent lawyers who conducted business with or on behalf of the rest of the elite, and the Masters who had graduated from Oxford or Cambridge and were subsequently engaged by Christ's College

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p.35-6; Graham, 'Settler Society', p.134-5

<sup>39</sup> The arguments for and against adopting such a methodology when conducting research in the history of New Zealand and of other societies during the nineteenth century, and the ultimate justification for doing so, have been discussed at length; see, for example: M. B. Katz, 'Occupational classification in history', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, III (Summer 1972), pp.63-88; C. Toynbee, 'Class and Social Structure in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', *NZJH*, Vol.13, No.1, April 1979; M. Fairburn, 'Social Mobility and Opportunity in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', *NZJH*, Vol.13, No.1, April 1979; G. Ryan, 'Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps': The Making of New Zealand Cricket, 1832-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996, pp.18-23.

<sup>40</sup> Fairburn, 'Social Mobility and Opportunity in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', p.46.

in order to educate the sons of the elite. Some interconnection existed between the rural and urban branches of the elite. Runholders and farmers usually owned substantial estates or houses in Christchurch or Timaru, and many merchants and urban professionals invested considerable amounts of capital in large rural enterprises.

Immediately below the elites in the social hierarchy were the 'Middling Classes', a term popularised by R. S. Neale.<sup>41</sup> This grouping can also be separated into distinct elements. The majority of the middling classes resided in urban centres. Many were petty functionaries in government agencies, clerks, salesmen and auctioneers employed in large commercial and financial institutions. These individuals were directly subordinate to the elites, being responsible for carrying out the multiplicity of mundane financial and legal transactions which were required to ensure that commercial life continued without interruption. A number of these clerical employees were following careers which would take them into the elites, and some were in fact the sons of members of the elites. The remainder of the urban middling classes were independent proprietors of small businesses and tradesmen who usually employed labour. Because they enjoyed a measure of independence, this sector did not generally act in conformity with the desires of the elite. Indeed, because their fortunes were subject to the vicissitudes of economic life, they tended to have more in common with the skilled stratum of the working classes.

The category of 'Blue Collar Workers' incorporates manual labourers of all levels of skill who were employed for wages but were not, as far as can be ascertained, employers of labour. The great majority of manual workers resided in urban areas. Skilled workers, particularly in rural areas, occasionally entered the ranks of petty proprietors either achieving

permanent independence through the exercise of industry and thrift or creating small enterprises which they managed while continuing in employment for wages.

Rather than constituting a definitive statement on class and occupation in Canterbury or any other part of New Zealand between 1850 and 1890, this model is merely intended to provide 'a convenient formula by which broad groups of individuals can be distinguished from one another.'<sup>42</sup> The results of the surveys undertaken to determine the extent to which the various classes were involved in sporting bodies or activities are displayed in tabular form in the relevant Chapters of the thesis, in the manner displayed in Table M/S-1. The sources from which the necessary information was extracted are summarised in Appendix A.

TABLE M/S-1  
EXAMPLE

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Elites</b>	
(a) Professionals	
(b) Major rural proprietors	
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	
(b) Semi-professionals	
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	
(b) Semi-skilled	
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	

Notwithstanding the persistence of imported social divisions, the same Liberalism which prevailed in Britain was also hegemonic in Canterbury. The omnipotence of the 'liberal

<sup>41</sup> R. S. Neale, 'Class and Class Consciousness in Early Nineteenth Century England: Three Classes or Five?', in R. S. Neale, ed., *History and Class: Essential Readings in Theory and Interpretation*, Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, Oxford, 1984, pp.143-64.

<sup>42</sup> Ryan, 'Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.21.



paradigm' was reflected in the conduct of public life in the Province prior to the late 1880s. A majority of the population apparently eschewed the politics of overt class conflict and favoured candidates for public office who supported the notion that the agencies of Government should function to create 'equality of opportunity' for all to gain their economic 'independence'.<sup>43</sup> Thus, while settlers were prepared to install 'men of rank' in positions of authority, they displayed a clear preference for those who endorsed the creation of 'a new liberal social reality'<sup>44</sup> in which no group was favoured over any other and in which all could rise freely by means of talent and hard work. The predominance of liberalism and the ideal of mobility made it difficult for sporting bodies in Canterbury to ostracise working class competitors through the operation of such instruments as the 'mechanics' rules' which were used for that purpose by exclusive athletic and rowing clubs in England.

Attitudes and perceptions regarding the functions of women which had prevailed 'at Home' were also imported into Canterbury, though both underwent some modification through the force of circumstances. Because Canterbury was a planned settlement, women and girls were not completely outnumbered and constituted between forty and forty-five per cent of the population throughout the Colonial period.<sup>45</sup> Although women remained subservient to men, they were valued in the Colony because they were useful. Labour of all kinds was in short supply, writes Charlotte Macdonald, 'and the demand for women to perform domestic work was as insistent as that for men to help with the harvest and to build roads.'<sup>46</sup> A constant influx of immigrant 'girls' was widely expected to have other advantages for the development of life in the Colony. Women in the colony, claims Raewyn Dalziel in her seminal article 'The

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<sup>43</sup> G. Wright, 'The Petty Bourgeoisie in Colonial Canterbury,' pp.81, 86.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, p.104.

<sup>45</sup> C. Macdonald, 'Too Many Men and Too Few Women: Gender's 'Fatal Impact' in Nineteenth-Century Colonies', in C. Daley and D. Montgomerie, eds, *The Gendered Kiwi*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1999, p.25.

<sup>46</sup> C. Macdonald, *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-century New Zealand*, Allen and Unwin New Zealand Limited and Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 1990, p.19; R.

Colonial Helpmeet', 'were also charged with maintaining the moral tone of society' by restraining and refining 'the base instincts of men'<sup>47</sup> particularly after they had married. However, the duty of the Colonial wife was not fulfilled simply by propagating offspring, for both mothers and the children they bore were expected to support the family unit by making a tangible contribution to the domestic economy.<sup>48</sup> Numerous sporting events presented women and girls, particularly in rural areas, with opportunities to win prizes and thereby meet a significant proportion of these familial obligations. Thus, while accorded a status subordinate to that of men, women were considered essential to the maintenance of both the material progress and spiritual wellbeing of the Colony.

The 'Canterbury Pilgrims' who arrived in the 'First Four Ships' in December 1850 did not settle in a void but in a land inhabited by the 'original settler society', the Maori. In order to determine the parameters of the community which might have been involved in sporting activities, it is necessary to ascertain the extent to which settlers and Maori might have been willing to engage in commercial or, more particularly, social intercourse with one another. Graham claims that the predominance of British settlers and their descendants among the population of New Zealand prior to 1890 ensured that 'Cultural homogeneity was ... one of the hallmarks of colonial society.' One consequence of this situation was that there existed, especially in the North Island, 'a striking degree of intolerance towards non-European minorities and a strong sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority over coloured peoples.'<sup>49</sup> Alan Ward observes that such beliefs certainly shaped the attitudes of a great many settlers in the northern provinces of New Zealand toward their local native populations.<sup>50</sup>

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Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet: Women's Role and the Vote in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', NZJH, Vol.11, No.2, October 1977, p.115.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p.118-20.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p.116.

<sup>49</sup> Graham, 'Settler Society', p.116.

<sup>50</sup> A. Ward, *A Show of Justice: Racial 'Amalgamation' in Nineteenth Century New Zealand*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1995, p.161.

However, as Charlotte Macdonald notes, settler communities in the South Island developed without having much contact with Maori.<sup>51</sup> By 1860 Ngai Tahu, the *tangata whenua* of Canterbury, had been effectively confined to 4,000 hectares of reserves near Kaiapoi which had been allocated to them by Governor Browne. It is therefore possible that any prejudice harboured by the colonists of Canterbury toward Maori was probably far less virulent than that which existed in the North Island. Nevertheless, Evison states that new settlers regarded local Maori 'with amusement, indifference, or perhaps contempt, but certainly not as equals.' Only with firm government and careful tutelage could the simple-minded, brutal and perhaps treacherous 'savages' be 'civilised' and 'elevated' to the level of European settler society.<sup>52</sup> Thus, one of the matters addressed at various points in this study is whether Maori became involved in sporting activities organised by Pakeha and, if so, whether such involvement was limited in extent to participation in events arranged at sites located in close proximity to centres of Maori population in Canterbury.

This thesis will illustrate the significance of sport in the society which developed in one province of New Zealand between 1850 and 1890. However, placing the text within the historiography of nineteenth century New Zealand is difficult because of the virtual absence of sport from the literature produced by scholars who have studied the period. Most of the principal texts which relate to the period give the impression that life in the colony was devoid of any sporting activity worthy of mention.<sup>53</sup> A few bold attempts have been made to

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<sup>51</sup> Macdonald, 'Too Many Men and Too Few Women', p.22; Silcock, 'Immigration into Canterbury under the Provincial Government', p.186.

<sup>52</sup> H. C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamou, The Greenstone Island: A History of the Southern Maori During the European Colonization of New Zealand*, Aoraki Press in association with the Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board & Te Runanganui o Tahu, Christchurch, 1993, pp.29, 99, 336 395, 399.

<sup>53</sup> O. A. Gillespie, *South Canterbury: A Record of Settlement*, South Canterbury Centennial History Committee, Timaru, 1958; W. H. Oliver, *The Story of New Zealand*, Faber and Faber, London, 1963; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1965; W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II: General History, 1854-76 and Cultural*

demonstrate the significance of sport in Colonial society, though the emphasis in the majority of these works has been upon the influence allegedly exerted by rugby football on the formation of 'character' and 'national identity' in New Zealand.<sup>54</sup> Many of the general narrative histories written about different regions contain brief passages in which sporting activities are treated in isolation from the social context in which they occurred. Sport becomes simply one of several 'amusements' and leisure activities in which colonists indulged during the few hours of idleness then available.<sup>55</sup>

In recent years Miles Fairburn and Caroline Daley have acknowledged the presence of sport in the colony, but have denied that sporting activities played any substantial role in the development of society in New Zealand during the early years of settlement. Fairburn asserts in his controversial *The Ideal Society and its Enemies* that one can 'safely discount the social significance of communal festivals' for the development of a 'social organisation' of sufficient strength to overcome the 'atomisation' and subsequent social disorder which he alleges prevailed throughout New Zealand during the nineteenth century. These events were allegedly 'too diffuse, fleeting and infrequent to be effective instruments of social interaction.' Moreover, it was possible for the 'popularity and unitary function' of such institutions to decline, particularly when local populations were presented with an opportunity to patronise 'a multitude of competing attractions organised ... by a variety of segmented groupings'. Fairburn also claims that 'sports clubs and teams' were 'too weak' before 1890 to facilitate the

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*Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1971; A. Grey, *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 1994; J. Belich, *A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, Allen Lane and the Penguin Press, Auckland, 1996; K. Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand, With Additional Material by Raewyn Dalziel*, Penguin Books, Auckland, 2000.

<sup>54</sup> J. O. C. Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History, Revised Edition*, Penguin Books, Auckland, 1996, pp.81-130; K. Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity*, Allen and Unwin in association with the Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1986, pp.143-55.

<sup>55</sup> Gillespie, *South Canterbury*, pp.425-37; Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III*, pp.474-5; G. W. Graham and L. J. B. Chapple, *Ellesmere County: The Land, The Lake, And The People, 1864 - 1964*, Ellesmere County Council, Ellesmere, Canterbury, 1965, pp.61-71; P. Wood, *Kaiapoi: A Search for Identity*, Waimakariri District Council, Rangiora, 1993; E. Olssen, *A History of Otago*, John McIndoe Limited, Dunedin, 1984.

development of social organisation in New Zealand, primarily because the 'nature of colonial working time' stripped 'the generality of working men of opportunities for organised leisure'.<sup>56</sup>

Other evidence appears to indicate that organised sport was an insignificant presence in colonial life. In *Girls and Women, Men and Boys*, an excellent study of the small semi-urban community of Taradale in Hawke's Bay between 1886 and 1930, Caroline Daley states that 'Communal leisure, involving a wide range of people, was a constant' in the social life of the inhabitants. However, for most of the inhabitants of the town 'communal leisure did not mean large scale, organised community festivals, with everyone participating.' Instead 'home-based sociability, drawing in family and friends', constituted the norm. The absence of 'community festivals' from the life of Taradale was not an unusual circumstance, because 'In western societies at that time ... few people had the time or energy to organise such events.' Daley suggests that no formally organised sporting activities existed in Taradale prior to the establishment of the first rugby club in the late 1880s and a cricket club in the mid-1890s.<sup>57</sup> Thus, according to the majority of accounts, sporting activity in general was either a rare phenomenon or contributed little to the development of society in New Zealand during the years before 1890.

However, a small body of literature challenges this 'received wisdom'. These authors argue that sport was plainly among the items of 'cultural baggage' carried by the settlers who arrived in New Zealand between 1850 and 1890.<sup>58</sup> In 'An Analysis of Trends in New Zealand

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<sup>56</sup> M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*, pp.158, 161, 179-81, 185-6.

<sup>57</sup> C. Daley, *Girls & Women, Men & Boys: Gender in Taradale, 1886-1930*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1999, p.92.

<sup>58</sup> K. Pearson, 'Meanings and Motivation in Sport', in J. Hinchcliff, ed., *The Nature and Meaning of Sport in New Zealand*, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland, Auckland, 1978, p.9; M. Fairburn, 'Local Community or Atomized Society?', p.161; M. Fairburn, 'Vagrants, "Folk Devils" and Nineteenth-Century New Zealand as a Bondless Society', *Historical Studies*, Vol.21, No.85, October 1985, pp.504-5.

Sport From 1840 to 1900',<sup>59</sup> a pioneering graduate essay, Jennifer Barclay alleges that, while sporting activity in New Zealand before 1870 was characterised by improvisation and informality, such considerations are far outweighed by 'the fact that groups which would normally not mix socially were coming into social contact through the medium of sport.'<sup>60</sup> Though the 'momentary unity' which occurs in the course of any 'sporting contact' is 'often quite spontaneous', this connection may become 'more solid and permanent' if it is conducted on a regular basis at short intervals. Barclay claims that the existence of 'a good team in which there is a positive commitment by the members to their common pursuit' provides evidence of 'a socially integrated group'. Therefore, it follows that a relationship exists 'between participation in sporting activities and social adjustment which is indicated by the building of closer relations between individuals and the generating of inter-group solidarity.'<sup>61</sup>

One attempt has been made to assess the role played by sport in the development of society within a particular Province during the Colonial period. In his scholarly monograph, entitled 'A History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Otago',<sup>62</sup> Scott Crawford has traced the evolution of sport and leisure activities in Otago between 1848, when the settlement was established, and 1900. Crawford argues that the recreations of the earliest settlers were arranged only on an intermittent basis, were generally related to work and tended to involve the consumption of alcohol. The range of sports played in Otago before 1861 was limited by the small number of colonists, the primitive system of communications, the need for the inhabitants to work in order to survive and a stagnant economy. The constraints imposed by material circumstances were reinforced by the predominance in local affairs of a

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<sup>59</sup> J. Barclay, 'An Analysis of Trends in New Zealand Sport From 1840 to 1900', B.A. (Hons) extended essay, Massey University, 1977.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, pp.69, 56, 11.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>62</sup> S. A. G. M. Crawford, 'A History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Otago', PhD Thesis, University of Queensland, 1984.

Calvinistic religious élite whose members were staunchly opposed to pastimes which encouraged idleness. However, following the gold rush which commenced in 1861 and the subsequent expansion of the demographic and economic bases of the Province, the variety of sporting activity undertaken in both rural and urban areas increased dramatically. Cricket, athletics, football and 'horse racing' had all become firmly established in Otago by the late 1870s. Crawford observes that these sports were prominent among an array of amusements which had the effect of fostering a sense of community throughout the province.<sup>63</sup>

Because most of the settler population of Canterbury was drawn from Britain<sup>64</sup>, a review of the literature on the sporting culture which prevailed during the mid-Victorian period may prove useful when exploring a number of important issues which emerge from an examination of the evidence provided by a study of sport in the province. Three general questions are posed in relation to the five sports explored in this thesis. Who were the actual organisers of sporting affairs? How did these persons finance the divers events and bodies for which they were responsible? What motivated groups or individuals to make the effort to organise such activities?

Significant information on the organisers of sports, their motivations and the means by which they financed various activities, in a British context appears in *Sport and the British* by Richard Holt,<sup>65</sup> *Rowing in England: A Social History* by Eric Halliday,<sup>66</sup> and the classic *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players* authored by Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard.<sup>67</sup> These excellent studies indicate that in Britain the administration of aquatics, athletics, cricket and

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<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, *passim*, esp. pp.56-7, 136-53.

<sup>64</sup> Most of the settler population were English, with fewer Scots than settled in Otago and fewer Irish than found in New South Wales. see Pickens 'Canterbury 1851-1881: Demography and Mobility' for a full discussion.

<sup>65</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp.110-1.

<sup>66</sup> E. Halladay, *Rowing in England: A Social History: The Amateur Debate*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1990, *passim*, esp. Chapter 2.

rugby football clubs was gradually passing into the hands of men drawn from the middle classes. Control of 'socially exclusive' clubs, from which the 'lower orders' were ostracised, was increasingly shared between a growing middle class 'élite' whose members had been educated at public schools, and possibly Oxford or Cambridge, and the 'closed, self-perpetuating aristocratic cliques'<sup>68</sup> whose members had previously monopolised positions of authority. On the other hand, the administration of clubs categorised by Dunning and Sheard as 'open', in the sense that they recruited membership 'from different levels in the class hierarchy',<sup>69</sup> was becoming the prerogative of those members of the middle classes who had seldom attended public school and instead derived their status from an involvement in commerce or industry.

Very little detailed information has been published regarding those who organised sport in Canterbury before 1890, and many important questions remain to be answered. Who organised the various sporting events held throughout Canterbury and occupied the positions of authority within the formally constituted sports clubs and other governing bodies? Were they drawn from any particular social class or classes? Was the selection of officials influenced by any other considerations? The information contained in this study will shed new light on the activities of those whom Stothart describes as the "unsung" heroes of New Zealand sports development.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players*, p.141.

<sup>68</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp.110-1.

<sup>69</sup> Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players*, p.141.

<sup>70</sup> B. Stothart, 'The Development of Sport Administration in New Zealand: From Kitchen Table to Computer', in C. Collins, ed., *Sport in New Zealand Society*, Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 2000, p.86.



The second element necessary for the maintenance of organised sport is a reliable source of finance. The work of several historians, but particularly Wray Vamplew,<sup>71</sup> has revealed that the money required to fund sporting activities in Britain during the Victorian era was derived from a variety of sources. 'Socially exclusive' rugby, athletic and rowing clubs, all of which were overtly 'amateur', and the host of small local clubs active in all sports, depended heavily upon fees and annual subscriptions extracted from their membership in order to survive.<sup>72</sup> Neil Wigglesworth provides several examples of clubs subsisting on financial resources provided by members in his accomplished discussion of 'club fortunes' in *A Social History of English Rowing*.<sup>73</sup> Of far greater importance to many organisations, particularly to County cricket clubs and to the larger 'open' rugby football clubs in the North of England, was money taken 'at the gate' from spectators willing to pay for admission to matches.<sup>74</sup> In his extremely informative *Cricket and the Victorians*, Keith Sandiford notes a heavy reliance among County cricket clubs throughout England on the generosity of wealthy patrons, often members of the nobility, to donate the funds necessary at the end of each season to prevent them from going into liquidation.<sup>75</sup> Thus, the sources of funding available to sporting bodies in Britain were many and varied, if not always totally adequate or reliable.

Thus, by the time a steady tide of settlers began to stream into Canterbury a number of models for raising the money necessary to fund sport had been created. However, the existing secondary literature contains no information about the means by which money was raised to fund sport in the province. How were sporting activities financed in the Province throughout the period under consideration? Did the settlers follow any of the precedents

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<sup>71</sup> W. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988.

<sup>72</sup> K. A. P. Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians*, Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1994, pp.56, 57-8; J. Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes, 1870-1914*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993, pp.45, 116.

<sup>73</sup> Wigglesworth, *A Social History of English Rowing*, pp.144-65.

<sup>74</sup> Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players*, p.138.

established 'at Home', or develop innovative methods of their own to raise capital? Whatever mechanisms were employed, the amount of activity uncovered during the preparation of this thesis indicates that they were highly successful.

Perhaps the most fundamental question relates to motivation. Peter Bailey, Richard Holt, Hugh Cunningham and others have identified and studied several groups which were motivated to organise sport in Britain from the 1840s. Entrepreneurs, especially publicans, sought to increase their profits by arranging prize fights, or wrestling, pedestrian or rowing matches, to which they hoped to attract large numbers of paying spectators.<sup>76</sup> Many middle class social reformers, alarmed at the poor physical and 'moral' condition of the urban working classes and concerned that social and political disorder might be imminent, prescribed the dissemination of 'rational recreation' to supplant the 'regrettable' pastimes on which members of the proletariat squandered their leisure hours.<sup>77</sup> 'Reformers certainly recommended physical exercise to the working classes', writes Peter Bailey in his seminal *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, and a 'growing number of athletic churchmen urged their colleagues to develop games skills as a means of reaching and extending their working class congregations.' Many clergy took heed and became heavily involved in establishing cricket clubs, while others 'set out to claim souls with a Bible in one hand and a football in the other.'<sup>78</sup>

One final source of motivation cannot be overlooked. 'The popular expansion' of football and athletics after 1870, claims Bailey, 'derived a great deal of impetus from below'.

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<sup>75</sup> Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians*, pp.65-8

<sup>76</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1987, pp.41-2; Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp.148-50; Wigglesworth, *A Social History of English Rowing*, pp.36-7; H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c. 1780-c. 1880*, Croom Helm Ltd., London, pp.27-8.

<sup>77</sup> Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution*, pp.90-107; Holt, *Sport and the British*, p.136; Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, pp.47-8.

Working men 'generated their own encouragement, and showed also how little they were deterred by explicit discouragement.' This enthusiasm was simply another manifestation of the longstanding and 'considerable popular appetite for sport in England'.<sup>79</sup>

Histories of sport in Australia, particularly *Paradise of Sport*<sup>80</sup> by Richard Cashman which examines the rise of organised sport in Australia, and the superb *Elysian Fields*<sup>81</sup> in which John Daly presents a regional perspective, also contain comments on the significance of those driven by the profit motive for the development of sport. 'Sporting entrepreneurs' brought the first two English cricket teams to Australia, and sponsored the leading professional scullers of the period.<sup>82</sup> Publicans were frequently involved in trotting and thoroughbred racing, and constantly organised cricket, foot-races, pigeon-shooting, wrestling, boxing, billiards, bowling, quoits and skittles in an effort to increase their custom.<sup>83</sup>

To date, the question of motivation has been at best incidental to the study of other issues in the writings of historians of sport in New Zealand during the nineteenth century. Thus, the question of why those who organised sporting activities in Canterbury bothered to do so remains to be answered. Was sport used by publicans or other entrepreneurs as a means of making money? Were individuals stimulated to become involved in the organisation of sport by the prospect of obtaining rewards other than those of a material kind? Did organisations propounding 'moral reform' use sport as a means of 'social control'? Were sporting activities simply intended to provide a form of entertainment which satisfied the

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<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, pp.145-7; Holt, *Sport and the British*, p.138.

<sup>79</sup> Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, p.147.

<sup>80</sup> R. Cashman, *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995.

<sup>81</sup> Daly, *Elysian Fields*, pp.46-50.

<sup>82</sup> Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, pp.188-9; R. Cashman, 'Cricket', in W. Vamplew *et al*, eds, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport, Second Edition*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p.117.

<sup>83</sup> Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, pp.22-5; D. Adair, 'Public-house Sports', in W. Vamplew *et al*, eds, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport, Second Edition*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, pp.339-40.

‘popular appetite for sport’ transported to Canterbury in the cultural baggage of the settler population, and to relieve the tedium of life in a new and relatively undeveloped Colony? Each of these possibilities will be examined at various points throughout the thesis.

What is not clear from the existing literature is how ‘socially inclusive’ sporting activity actually was in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. The literature relating to the issue of class relations in sport in the British context is extensive. A number of sports in Britain, particularly rowing and athletics, were certainly socially exclusive. Neil Wigglesworth, Eric Halliday, Richard Holt and Peter Bailey all note that many clubs and governing bodies drafted and enforced rules ostensibly relating to ‘amateurism’ which effectively excluded from membership all but those of upper and middle class background. In his tightly-focussed *Sport and the English Middle Classes* John Lowerson claims that in many instances the ‘*English*’ rather than the ‘*British*’ middle classes used sport as an ‘agent of their development and an instrument of their self-definition.’<sup>84</sup> Consequently, sportsmen of working class origin could only participate in ‘amateur’ aquatics or athletics by joining ‘open’ or ‘mixed’ clubs. Organisations and individuals in the ‘exclusive’ and ‘open’ divisions generally did not engage in competition with one another. Thus, both athletics and aquatics were characterised by structural bifurcation to the extent that the ‘exclusive’ and ‘open’ categories of competition within each effectively became separate sports. This state of affairs persisted in athletics until the Amateur Athletic Association was established in 1880. However in aquatics change did not occur until the ‘exclusive’ Amateur Rowing Association modified its rules in 1937 and finally absorbed the ‘open’ National Amateur Rowing Association in 1956.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, p.viii.

<sup>85</sup> E. Halliday, ‘Of Pride and Prejudice: The Amateur Question in English Nineteenth-Century Rowing’, *IJHS*, Vol.4, No.1, May 1987, p.52.

Social divisions also endured in other sports. Cricket teams at the highest levels of competition frequently consisted of players drawn from a variety of social backgrounds, though clear distinctions between ‘amateurs’ (who tended to be drawn from the ‘leisured’ upper classes) and working class ‘professionals’ were maintained both on and off the field.<sup>86</sup> The situation which emerged in rugby football after 1870 was more complicated. In the south and west of Wales, and the North and Midlands of England, ‘open’ clubs preponderated in which men of the industrial middle and working classes mixed freely. However, in London and the Home Counties the great majority of clubs were ‘exclusive’ and remained the preserve of the upper and middle classes, many of whom had attended Public Schools.<sup>87</sup> Though not always deeply divisive, social class remained a significant issue in almost every major sport in Britain.

Several questions will be addressed regarding the importance of class in the development of sport in Canterbury prior to 1890. Did sport exhibit a tendency to perpetuate or modify class relations imported from Britain? Did groups other than prosperous and leisured male Pakeha (European settlers or their descendants) participate in organised sports? If the working classes took part in such activities, how extensive was their involvement and did it increase over time? Indeed, did competitors engaged in blue collar occupations constitute a significant presence in any particular sport? What factors, if any, might have impeded the efforts of the working classes to become active participants in sport? Were attempts made to exclude working class athletes from any specific events or activities? The answers to these queries will be drawn from every sport examined in this thesis. Although the primary focus of this study is upon male Pakeha other groups were obviously resident in Canterbury. Sufficient evidence exists to permit an examination of the involvement of female

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<sup>86</sup> Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians*, pp.80-108; Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players*, p.181.

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 130-64.

settlers and Maori in organised sport, and the participation of these two groups will be acknowledged and analysed whenever it occurs.

In fact, this study will endeavour to draw from the available evidence a preliminary sketch of the extent to which women and girls in Canterbury were involved in sporting activity between 1850 and 1890. The historiography of women's sport during the Victorian period is of limited utility in addressing this question. The emphasis in the thorough, but limited, studies undertaken by Kathleen McCrone,<sup>88</sup> Margaret Hammer<sup>89</sup> and Claire Simpson<sup>90</sup> is on the positive effects of increased involvement in sporting activity for upper and middle class women in their drive to promote 'the broader process of emancipation'. Moreover, the literature contains no account of the experiences in sport of women and girls from the lower middle and working classes in Britain, the Australian Colonies or New Zealand.

The consensus among historians appears to be that only a privileged minority of females participated in sport between 1850 and 1890, and that the conditions under which they did so were tightly circumscribed. 'Sport has always been a male preserve', writes Richard Holt, 'with its own language, its initiation rites, and models of true masculinity, its clubbable, jokey cosiness.' Constructing 'male friendships and sustaining large and small communities of men has always been the prime purpose of sport.'<sup>91</sup> Holt concludes that 'Women have been banished to the sidelines both literally and metaphorically, except for a minority of public schoolgirls.'<sup>92</sup> In mid-Victorian England, writes McCrone, the 'arbiters of acceptable behaviour considered it undignified for the daughters of gentlemen to develop muscles or

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<sup>88</sup> K. McCrone, *Playing the Game: Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1940*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1988.

<sup>89</sup> M. A. E. Hammer, '"Something Else in the World to Live For": Sport and the Physical Emancipation of Women and Girls in Auckland, 1880-1920', M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1990.

<sup>90</sup> C. Simpson, 'A Social History of Women and Cycling in Nineteenth Century New Zealand', unpublished PhD thesis, Lincoln University, 1998.

<sup>91</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p.8.

exhibit athletic prowess'. These 'arbiters' also 'regarded the elements of competition and qualities of character intrinsic to many sports as inimical to the female role' as the weaker and dependent sex.<sup>93</sup> Margaret Hammer observes that, as late as the 1880s, 'the woman who played sport ... was perceived as a threat to the very structure of Victorian society'. Firstly, her existence challenged the 'orthodox medical doctrine' supporting the scheme of separate male and female social spheres, in which the female was deemed the weaker and therefore naturally subordinate. Such a woman was 'in danger of 'masculinising' herself and thereby upsetting the delicate balance between the sexes.' Secondly, having become masculine, this woman would make entirely inappropriate demands for greater rights in education and employment, and would even seek to become enfranchised. Thus, in an effort to avoid 'the stigma of overt masculinity' and 'retain their status as 'ladies'', women played only 'individual and team sports which did not have a long history of male participation'.<sup>94</sup>

The assessment contained in the solitary general analysis of sport and society in colonial New Zealand proposes that the amount of time devoted to sport by women was at best minimal. The 'New Zealand woman', Barclay maintains, 'was often prevented by the hard and unsophisticated life she led'<sup>95</sup> from participating in sports of any kind. Such a conclusion suggests that researchers should perhaps not expect to find much evidence that women and girls, other than those from upper and middle class backgrounds, were involved in sporting activities. Although the emphasis in this study is not upon games played primarily by women, such as tennis or croquet, a close examination of the sources used will reveal something about the extent to which female settlers were involved in a variety of sports in Canterbury during the period between 1850 and 1890.

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<sup>92</sup> *ibid.* p.8.

<sup>93</sup> McCrone, *Playing the Game*, p.7.

<sup>94</sup> Hammer, 'Something Else in the World to Live For', pp.4, 144.

<sup>95</sup> Barclay, 'An Analysis of Trends in New Zealand Sport From 1840 to 1900', pp.59-60

Another important matter to be considered is the significance of Maori in sports in Canterbury prior to 1890. The degree to which Maori were involved in sport throughout New Zealand during the Colonial period remains largely unknown. Robin McConnell notes that 'The available considerations of Maori in sport are few.' McConnell claims that the 'Eurocentric social practices of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in New Zealand (Aotearoa) with their social and industrial imperatives have prevailed upon Maori society', and had a major impact upon the leisure activities in which Maori become involved. 'The effect upon Maori 'sport' of such forces', he posits, 'has seen the imposition of European sports and sport administration, the vigorous adoption of European sports by Maori, the loss or reshaping of traditional Maori physical activities and games, and the control of the Maori body by Pakeha rules and sport regulation.'<sup>96</sup> However, such critiques reveal nothing specific with respect to either the involvement of Maori in sporting activities arranged and conducted by settlers in Canterbury during the nineteenth century, or the attitudes which prevailed among those settlers regarding the participation of Maori. Both of these issues will be examined closely during the course of this dissertation.

A series of major themes, arising out of the British and Australian historiographies of sport, will be explored through an analysis of various sporting activities which enjoyed some measure of popularity in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. In addition to examining the development of the clubs and the major regattas which flourished in the province after 1860, much of Chapter One will be devoted to studying the rise and nature of 'amateurism' in rowing in Canterbury. Amateurism is also one of the major themes in Chapters Two, Three and Four, which deal collectively with the various forms of track and field athletics extant in

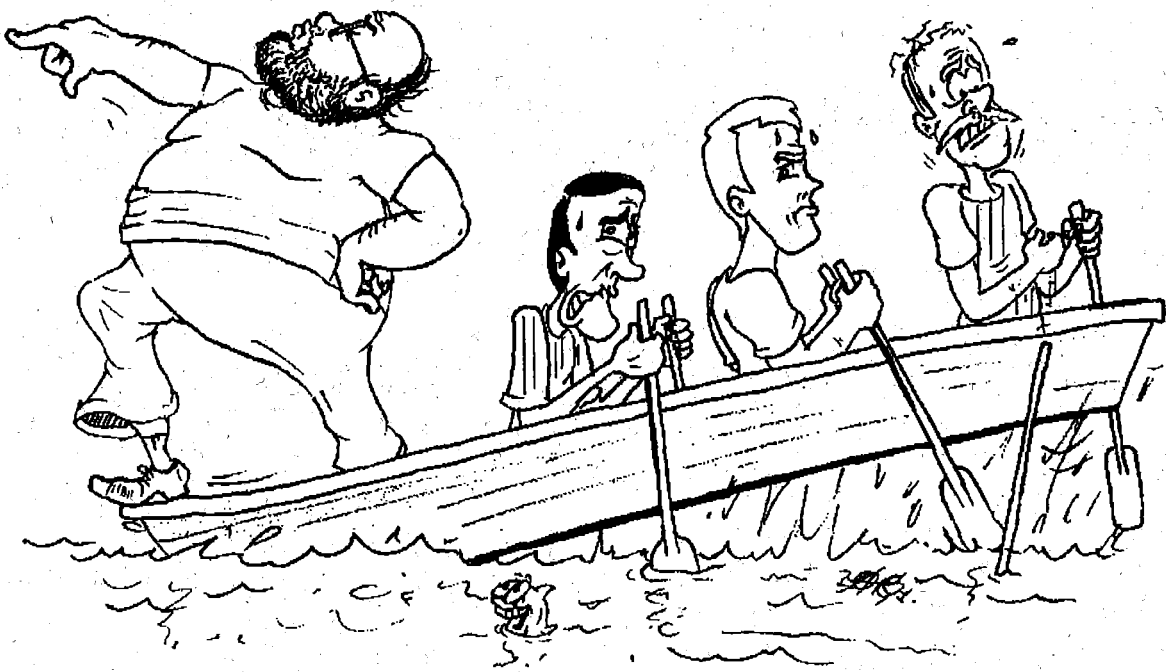
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<sup>96</sup> R. McConnell, 'Maori, the Treaty of Waitangi and Sport: A Critical Analysis', in C. Collins, ed., *Sport in New Zealand Society*, Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 2000, pp.230-1.



the province between 1850 and 1890. The impact of rail transport on sport in Canterbury from the late 1860s is also analysed in the first two Chapters. The connections between sport, work and identity are explored in Chapter Five through a study of ploughing matches. Although, as mentioned above, issues of class, participation and exclusiveness are discussed extensively throughout the thesis, these themes are particularly prominent in Chapter Six which is devoted to an examination of cricket. The emphasis in the final Chapter is primarily upon the influence of rugby football on the growth of communal or, more accurately in the case of colonial Canterbury, provincial identity between 1875 and 1890. Through this study one glimpses the first manifestations of the skill, spirit, energy and determination to succeed which eventually brought New Zealand to prominence in the sports of ploughing, rowing, cricket, rugby football and athletics.

***BOTH  
A SOCIAL OCCASION  
AND  
A SOCIAL EVENT***



***REGATTAS AND ROWING  
IN  
CANTERBURY, 1850-1890***

# *CHAPTER 1*

## *BOTH A SOCIAL OCCASION AND A SPORTING EVENT: REGATTAS AND ROWING IN CANTERBURY, 1850-1890*

Rowing was among the very first sporting activities organised by the inhabitants of the Canterbury Settlement, and by 1870 it had engendered a variety of institutions and festivals which were of considerable 'social significance'. Several rowing clubs were established during the 1860s and at least three proved to be durable and very strong social organisations. Moreover, the regattas held annually from the late 1860s at Lyttelton and Kaiapoi, and in the Heathcote Estuary, became communal festivals which routinely attracted thousands of spectators of all classes. Central to the emergence of regattas as major social events in Canterbury was the expansion of the system of railways and a concomitant increase in the capacity of that division of the rail network devoted to handling passenger traffic.

Even the introduction of formal rules relating to amateurism did not diminish the attractiveness of rowing in Canterbury, or in any other Province, for participants from a wide range of social and occupational backgrounds. The inauguration of formal regulations in England had divided the sport along class lines, while serious tensions arose between the bodies which controlled rowing in the Colonies of New South Wales and Victoria in Australia over different interpretations of what constituted an amateur. However, early attempts to introduce restrictive regulations within Canterbury largely failed, and the rules in force throughout the Colony from 1887 were formulated and applied in a spirit of comparative liberality. Thus, the existence of rules relating to amateurism did not lead rowing in New Zealand to become an exclusive or 'closed' sport.

The social inclusiveness inherent in the sport was not infinite, for direct participation in rowing in Canterbury before 1890 was effectively limited to Pakeha males. Women were prescribed supporting roles in the aquatic community created and dominated by men. Although the male members of the boating clubs in Christchurch spent many hours early in 1873 organising a bazaar 'in aid of their funds', it was their female relatives who actually provided the labour required to ensure that the venture was a success. The wives of eminent local politicians or boating men launched almost every new boat and presented many trophies to victorious crews. In order to 'stimulate...all rowing men' to greater exertions, women were urged both to become spectators and to create with their skilled needlework prizes of a more personal nature than the materially valuable but tawdry baubles around which competition was generally centred.<sup>1</sup>

By contrast, the close links that the Cure Boating Club (C.B.C.) of Kaiapoi had with the community may have accounted for the special nature of their membership policy. In December 1870 the Club 'decided to admit ladies as honorary members ... on payment of a subscription of 2s 6d each'. The 'names of nine ladies were [immediately] handed in accompanied by their subscriptions.'<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately the identities of these women remain unknown. This innovation was without significance for rowing in Canterbury more generally. No other club in the Province rushed to emulate the actions of the C.B.C. Moreover, only in extremely isolated instances before 1880 did any newspaper in Canterbury advance the notion that 'rowing ... as an exercise for ladies, if pursued in moderation ... becomes an amusement which they ought to patronise.'<sup>3</sup> The writer almost certainly did not intend to suggest that women should become involved in competitive rowing. Indeed, as Kathleen

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<sup>1</sup> WP, 6 March 1869; 22 February, 26 April 1873; LT, 17 May 1872.

<sup>2</sup> LT, 7, 12 December 1870.

<sup>3</sup> LT, 29 October 1867.

McCrone and Margaret Hammer have both observed, the cultivation of muscularity or athletic prowess by women or girls was generally considered not only unbecoming but also a destabilising influence on the delicate balance between the sexes and consequently a threat to the social order.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, females were almost certain to be denied the chance to become active members in any rowing club in Canterbury prior to 1890.

The presence of Maori in aquatic sports in Canterbury was also minimal. Maori competed vigorously in every Akaroa Regatta held during the early 1860s. 'Mary the Maori', a vessel owned and crewed by Maori, frequently 'had the honor of bearing the chief prize' in the race for 'five-oared' whaleboats, which was 'always *the* event at Akaroa'.<sup>5</sup> 'Natives' also demonstrated their athletic prowess in other activities associated with the regatta. 'The Maoris ... came out strong in the rural sports' at the Regatta held on 1 January 1862, 'carrying off the first prizes for foot racing and jumping in sacks and likewise catching the pig with the greased tail.' The 'great "event"' of the land sports was 'a foot race by Maori women, which was run in gallant style'.<sup>6</sup> The contribution of local Maori to the success of the proceedings occasionally extended beyond participation in scheduled events. On at least one occasion representatives of local *hapu* entertained competitors and spectators with a selection of musical items, including 'a Maori song or "Laka" [which] was given by the native ladies, assisted by the native lads, finishing with a war dance, in which both sexes and all ages did their best to appear demoniacal.'<sup>7</sup> Thus, local Maori constituted a significant presence at the principal sporting occasion held on Banks' Peninsula during the 1860s.

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<sup>4</sup> K. McCrone, *Playing the Game: Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1940*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1988, p.7; M. A. E. Hammer, '"Something Else in the World to Live For": Sport and the Physical Emancipation of Women and Girls in Auckland, 1880-1920', M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1990, pp.4, 144.

<sup>5</sup> LT, 11 January 1862; 12 January 1864; 18 January 1866.

<sup>6</sup> LT, 11 January 1862.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

However, for reasons which are not entirely clear, the involvement of Maori in the Akaroa Regatta appears to have ceased after the mid-1860s. Several possible explanations might be advanced to explain this turn of events. Withdrawal from the event may have been intended to serve as a demonstration of resentment at the refusal of the Crown to amend the terms of the Akaroa Purchase, which had been concluded in December 1856. The three local *hapu*, Ngati Irakehu, Ngati Mako of Wairewa and Ngai Tarewa of Onuku, had been induced to pass the title over their lands, which effectively constituted the 12,000 hectares forming the southern portion of Banks' Peninsula, to the Crown. In return, each *hapu* received a reserve of 162 hectares, equivalent to approximately ten acres per person, and £50 in cash. As the Maori themselves had explained during negotiations prior to the signature of the Deed, such an allocation was barely sufficient to ensure their subsistence. Indeed, some chiefs had asked for tracts amounting to 10,000 hectares to be set aside, but their entreaties were ignored.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps a more credible explanation is that Maori were forced out of the Akaroa Regatta, and out of aquatic sports in general, by a decline in their material circumstances. The Maori population of Banks' Peninsula was calculated in 1863 to have declined from approximately four hundred persons in the mid-1850s to a total of only about two hundred in December 1861. Thus, the formation of competitive crews may have become more difficult. Moreover, the deteriorating economic situation<sup>9</sup> in which they were trapped subsequent to the Kemp and Akaroa Purchases probably rendered them unable to meet the expenses inherent in obtaining, storing and maintaining new racing boats capable of competing with those owned by the settlers. While the fortunes of the tangata whenau waned, the fortunes of some of the élites among the settlers continued to grow.

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<sup>8</sup> H. C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamou, The Greenstone Island: A History of the Southern Maori During the European Colonization of New Zealand*, Aoraki Press in association with the Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board & Te Runanganui o Tahu, Christchurch, 1993, pp.374-75.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from James MacKay, Junr., to the Native Secretary, Auckland, 3 October 1863, in A. MacKay, ed., *A Compendium of Official Documents Relative to Native Affairs in the South Island*, Volume II [n.p.], Nelson, 1872, pp.137-9.

Rowing as an organised competitive sport made its first formal appearance in Canterbury within six months of the arrival of the First Four Ships. A regatta consisting primarily of races between various classes of rowing boat was held on Lyttelton Harbour on 24 May 1851 'in celebration of Her Majesty's thirty-second birthday.'<sup>10</sup> Though allowed to lapse through general indifference during the late 1850s, the Lyttelton Regatta was re-established in January 1862 and eventually became perhaps the largest aquatic sporting festival in the colony.

Rowing in the Province resembled in many ways the highly-developed sport which existed in England and the Australian colonies, though there were fundamental differences. The pinnacle of competitive rowing in England and New South Wales throughout most of this period was professional sculling, wherein individual oarsmen earned a proportion of their livelihoods by racing one another for money. Professional sculling depended for its survival upon the simultaneous existence of several determinants.

The first was a cadre of men whose occupations enabled them 'to become proficient with an oar'.<sup>11</sup> Thus the ranks of professional scullers were initially filled by those employed in some capacity in or around boats, generally either as watermen or boat-builders. However, by the late 1860s the skilled aquatic tradesmen were gradually being supplanted in England by industrial labourers from many backgrounds who had an interest in, and a talent for, rowing.<sup>12</sup> Scullers of the first rank, whatever their occupational background, were often 'sponsored by backers, which enabled them to be relatively free of the time and monetary

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<sup>10</sup> LT, 31 May 1851.

<sup>11</sup> S. Bennett, 'Professional Sculling in New South Wales', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol.71, Part 2, October 1985, p.128.

<sup>12</sup> E. Halladay, *Rowing in England: A Social History: The Amateur Debate*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1990, p.8

constraints of regular employment, and ... they could concentrate on improving technique and physical endurance.’<sup>13</sup>

Favourable geography was also of prime importance. In order to ensure their success contests between professional scullers had to be conducted on broad, sheltered and navigable areas of water conveniently sited within or near centres of population. Thus the Thames, the Tyne and the Parramatta placed London, Newcastle and Sydney respectively among the leading centres of professional sculling in the world. Races staged at an appropriate location attracted large numbers of spectators who were willing to wager on their ‘favourites’. This gambling was crucial, for backers expected to make profits from side bets frequently far in excess of whatever purse was being offered.<sup>14</sup>

Rowing, in common with such sports as rugby football, became increasingly organised throughout the nineteenth century. The first form of organisation was the regatta.<sup>15</sup> From the late 1830s politicians, publicans and businessmen in regional centres such as York, Chester, Lancaster and Southport sought to use regattas as a means of attracting holiday-makers from the large cities. Legislation which limited hours of labour in factories provided urban industrial workers with more leisure time, and the rapid expansion of the system of railways enabled them to travel far from home in search of amusement. Regattas thus became a prime source of public entertainment in Victorian Britain.<sup>16</sup>

Until the 1860s a number of prosperous amateur oarsmen who admired the aquatic skills of professional watermen had organised regattas and other tournaments as a means of

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<sup>13</sup> D. Adair, ‘Rowing and Sculling’, in W. Vamplew and B. Stoddart, eds, *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p.173.

<sup>14</sup> Bennett, ‘Professional Sculling in New South Wales’, p.129.

<sup>15</sup> N. Wigglesworth, *A Social History of English Rowing*, Frank Cass and Company Limited, London, 1992, pp. 26-8.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 34-42.



supplementing their meagre earnings. However, dismayed by the prevalence of fouling, cheating and 'squaring' at these events, the charitable amateurs abandoned their altruistic activities and joined others in organising and participating in regattas governed by strict rules which they hoped would raise the standard of rowing and provide oarsmen with the chance to compete in fair races.<sup>17</sup> These competitions were open only to 'gentleman amateurs'. Watermen - those connected with boat-building and eventually all men engaged in manual labour - were excluded as 'professionals' under the rubric of 'artisans.' Advocates of this policy claimed that the 'superior strength' of manual workers gave them an unnatural and unfair advantage over 'gentlemen'. Neil Wigglesworth declares bluntly that such assertions were 'unfounded in reality and served merely as a front for snobbery.'<sup>18</sup>

When regattas like those at Henley and Chester were 'amateur'; the criteria for acceptance remained obscure. There existed in rowing neither a coherent and authoritative definition of the term 'amateur' nor a central body to provide the necessary guidance. In an effort to remove all doubts the stewards of the Henley Regatta produced a definition in 1879, according to which

No person shall be considered an amateur oarsman or sculler -

1. Who has ever competed in any open competition for a stake, money, or entrance fee.
2. Who has ever competed with or against a professional for any prize.
3. Who has ever taught, pursued, or assisted in the practice of athletic exercises of any kind as a means of gaining a livelihood.
4. Who has ever been employed in or about boats for money or wages.

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<sup>17</sup> Halladay, *Rowing in England*, pp.9-12, 27; N. Wigglesworth, 'A History of Rowing in the North-west of England', *British Journal of Sports History*, Vol.3, No.3, 1986, p.149.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, p.152.

5. Who is or has been, by trade or employment for wages, a mechanic, artisan or labourer.<sup>19</sup>

This definition did not have ‘the force of law’ outside the Henley Regatta, and was considered by many amateur clubs in the north, the West Country and the Midlands to be too narrow and exclusive.<sup>20</sup>

The task of creating a definition of an amateur which would be accepted throughout England was undertaken by the Amateur Rowing Association, which was established in May 1882 by a group of élite rowing clubs based in and around London, and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The rules drafted by the Amateur Rowing Association in July 1884 relating to amateurism were almost identical to those formulated by the Henley stewards, except that they contained an additional clause which allowed for the reinstatement as an amateur of any oarsman who inadvertently competed alongside professionals. However, a substantial number of clubs based in regions of England outside the Home Counties, and several individuals of consequence within the sport, considered the continued exclusion of blue collar groups from the ranks of amateur oarsmen by means of the ‘mechanics’ clause’ to be highly objectionable. The persistence of this sentiment led to the establishment of the National Amateur Rowing Association in London on 5 September 1890. The rules of the new association regarding amateurism were very similar those of the Amateur Rowing Association, the only significant difference being the absence from the former of the despised ‘mechanics’ clause’. An attempt by the two associations in December 1890 to fashion a compromise ‘with respect to the definition of an amateur’ failed completely, and the control of amateur rowing in England remained divided between two rival bodies until 1956.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Halladay, *Rowing in England*, p.80.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, pp.46-8.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, pp.80-90.

Though it evolved along slightly different lines, amateur rowing in Australia experienced many of the same difficulties as the English sport. Regattas were 'central to competitive rowing' during the mid-nineteenth century. They were both a social occasion and a sporting event, in which 'individuals of high community status, notably civic leaders and merchants, offered patronage and sponsorship of regattas.'<sup>22</sup> Contrary to the trend then emerging in England, these events encouraged the participation of 'vocational' oarsmen by incorporating special classes of event for watermen, as well as others for amateurs, 'all comers', and youths.

From the 1860s, however, amateur rowing in Australia reflected English practice with the club becoming the basic unit of organisation. Clubs varied in being either 'exclusive' or 'open'. The former controlled access to membership by means of the 'black ball' test and high subscription rates, which enabled them to be maintained as 'a preserve for gentlemen of high social status.' 'Open' clubs recruited members from all classes, in the belief that on the water and ashore 'the manual labourer and the brainworker [should] row side by side in the same boat.'<sup>23</sup>

The pinnacle of competitive amateur rowing in Australia from the early 1870s was the intercolonial championship between New South Wales and Victoria. Disputes between the colonies stemming from their differing interpretations of the term 'amateur' bedevilled the event from its inception in 1863. As in England, no authoritative governing body existed to adjudicate on the matter. Therefore the authorities responsible for organising rowing in each colony formulated their own rules.

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<sup>22</sup> Adair, 'Rowing and Sculling', p.176.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, pp.177-78.

Prior to 1903 the New South Wales Rowing Association refused, for basically the same reasons as were advanced in England, to classify manual labourers as 'bona fide' amateurs. The strength which he gained through his work gave the 'artisan' an unfair advantage over the 'bona fide' amateur oarsman who earned his living 'confined in an office'.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the commitment of the manual labourer to the amateur ethos was thought to be highly questionable: 'a man who does not need to row for exercise must have some impure motive for taking to rowing'. The ideal amateur was considered in New South Wales to be 'a person of education, refinement, leisure and means.' As a winner he was 'fully satisfied with the acknowledgement of his relative merit' and sought no material reward. 'He will row because he likes to', wrote John Blackman in 1897, 'and win because he can'.<sup>25</sup>

Crotty believes that the definition of the term 'amateur' adopted by the Victorian Rowing Association reflected wider social attitudes in the colony. In New South Wales a strong sense of egalitarianism prevailed and the codes of behaviour and conventions that highlighted the class stratification of England were much weaker. Phrasing their description entirely in the negative, the Victorian Rowing Association indicated in 1879 precisely whom it considered not to be amateurs:

Anyone who has entered for a race advertised as for watermen; anyone who has rowed for a money prize in Victoria; anyone who has earned or partially earned his living by rowing, at or since the Melbourne Regatta, 1860; anyone who is or has been engaged in building, letting or tending boats; and on or after 1st Jan. 1879, anyone who is or has been a professional athlete,

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<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, p.178; M. Crotty, 'Rowing in Victoria, 1875-1914: A Social History', unpublished MA Thesis, Monash University, Melbourne, 1996, pp.94-5.

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Crotty, 'Rowing in Victoria, 1875-1914', pp.88, 94.

since the Melbourne Regatta, 1860. The committee reserves the right of refusing any entry.<sup>26</sup>

Watermen and boat-builders apart, manual labourers are conspicuously absent from the list of those excluded from the ranks of amateur oarsmen in Victoria. Amateurs were permitted to row for 'trophies', which effectively meant a prize in any form other than cash. Thus, the positions adopted by the New South Wales Rowing Association, and the Victorian Rowing Association with regard to amateurism broadly paralleled those espoused, respectively, by the Amateur Rowing Association and the National Amateur Rowing Association in England. The Rowing Associations of the two Australian Colonies proved unable to reconcile their divergent views throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century.<sup>27</sup> Rowing in England and Australia between 1850 and 1880 was thus distinguished by the complexity of its organisation and by deepening divisions over the issue of amateurism.

Rowing in Canterbury during this period resembled the Australian rather than the English model, though it differed significantly from both. The most obvious distinction was the absence of professional sculling. Infrequent 'wager-boat' races were held between 'scratch' crews at which considerable numbers of spectators congregated to support their favourites and to gamble on the result. However, the stakes in these contests were generally no higher than £25 a side,<sup>28</sup> their modesty suggesting a dearth of backers in Canterbury willing to provide the substantial prize money which would have encouraged the growth of match racing or professional sculling. Though relatively few in number, wager-boat races occasionally had significant consequences for the sport in Canterbury. Following a series of hotly contested matches at Kaiapoi in 1867 this town of less than one thousand inhabitants

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<sup>26</sup> M. S. Glynn, *The Victorian Rowing Register and Oarsman's Companion*, 1878, Melbourne, 1878, pp.11-12, quoted in Crotty, 'Rowing in Victoria, 1875-1914', p.88.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, pp.95-7.

<sup>28</sup> LT, 11, 28 March; 24, 27, 30 April; 6, 8, 9, 16, 25, 27 May; 5 June 1867; 22 January 1868.

suddenly found itself with three boating clubs, two of which had been formed by the crews of the challenge boats *Cure* and *Ariel* and their enthusiastic supporters.<sup>29</sup>

Even more inhibiting to the development of professional sculling in Canterbury was the shortage of suitable oarsmen. The only potential cadre of professional scullers in the Province consisted of the watermen operating on Lyttelton Harbour, but circumstances prevented them from performing that role. The geography of the region presented major obstacles, particularly before the late 1860s. The watermen were isolated by the Port Hills from the centre of population which could have provided on a regular basis large numbers of spectators prepared to gamble on boat races. By December 1867, when the Lyttelton Railway Tunnel opened to passenger traffic, three regattas and several rowing clubs had already been established. All of this activity, with the exception of one regatta, occurred north of the Port Hills in Christchurch and Kaiapoi. Thus, the sporting public had been provided with an alternative system of aquatic entertainment to professional sculling. Moreover, the environment in which the watermen worked was an area of semi-enclosed ocean, quite unsuitable for racing the sleek, flimsy 'fresh water' boats used by professional scullers.<sup>30</sup> No recourse was possible in Lyttelton to the comparatively smooth, sheltered waters of a river. The final complication was that, just as in England, the watermen were a dying breed. As far as can be ascertained no more than fifty-four watermen operated at the port in 1874, and the numbers declined rapidly thereafter.<sup>31</sup> Many of those who remained in business abandoned

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<sup>29</sup> P. Wood, *Kaiapoi: A Search for Identity*, Waimakariri District Council, Rangiora, 1993, pp.73, 76.

<sup>30</sup> WP, 2 September, 4 November 1871.

<sup>31</sup> *Stevens & Bartholomew's New Zealand Directory For 1866-67*, G. Stevens & D.H. Bartholomew, Melbourne, 1867, p. 161; *New Zealand Census 1874, 1878*; Geoff Vincent, 'Impossibly Elistist and Snobbish': Amateurism in Canterbury, 1850-1880, The Examples of Aquatics and Athletics', *Australian Society for Sports History*, Bulletin No.31, December 1999, pp. 6-12.

the oar in favour of new technology such as the steam launch.<sup>32</sup> Thus Canterbury lacked the money, facilities and personnel required to cultivate professional sculling.

By 1870 competitive rowing in Canterbury consisted principally of crews from formally organised clubs racing against one another at a number of regattas held in close proximity to Christchurch. However, the task of determining the precise nature of the membership of these clubs is complicated by the sources available for occupational identification. Four limitations are inherent in the electoral rolls of the period. The rolls do not contain information concerning club members who were under the age of legal adulthood. Secondly, those who had attained majority, but chose not to register, do not appear on the rolls. Moreover, not every male who was twenty-one and who wished to register met the requirements regarding property or annual rent which enabled him to qualify for the privilege. The final difficulty is that no information on the occupations of those who registered to vote was included in the rolls published between 1860 and 1879.

The Canterbury Rowing Club (C.R.C.) was unique in the Province, being an 'exclusive' or 'closed' organisation. Aspiring members had to be nominated by an existing member and elected at a General Meeting of the club, 'one black ball in four' being sufficient to ensure their exclusion.<sup>33</sup> This mechanism enabled the club to become a means of fostering solidarity within the urban élites and consolidating its ties to young white collar workers deemed worthy of membership.

Table 1.1 contains information regarding the forty-seven individuals who can be identified with certainty among fifty-eight recorded in various sources as being members of the C.R.C.

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<sup>32</sup> LT, 18 May 1897.

<sup>33</sup> 24 November 1868, Canterbury Rowing Club Minute Book, 18 March 1864 – 9 September 1881, M.S. 162/87, C.R.C. 2, Canterbury Museum Library, Christchurch.

during the 1868-69 season. Twenty-six were drawn from the élites, constituting a mélange of major urban and rural proprietors, managers of large commercial enterprises, professionals and senior officials. Of these, five owned major agricultural enterprises, eight were proprietors or managers of large commercial enterprises and six others were senior officials in the Provincial or General Governments. Among the seven professionals were three prominent Anglican clergymen, one of whom, the Reverend E. A. Lingard, was elected Club Captain for the 1869-70 season. The remaining twenty-one men were members of the middling classes, all but two being employed in some form of clerical occupation.<sup>34</sup>

**TABLE 1.1**  
**CANTERBURY ROWING CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1868-69<sup>35</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	7
(b) Major rural proprietors	5
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	14
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	16
(b) Semi-professionals	3
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	1
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

<sup>34</sup> See Information on Sources in Appendix A. The following sources have been consulted in the compilation of all the tables found throughout this thesis, with additional sources being utilised where appropriate: 'The Macdonald Dictionary of Biography', Canterbury Museum Library, *passim*; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Volume III: Canterbury*, Cyclopedia Company, Wellington, 1903, *passim*; L. G. D. Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, Whitcoulls, Christchurch, 1975, *passim*; W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II: General History, 1854-76 and Cultural Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1971, *passim*; G. W. Graham and L. J. B. Chapple, *Ellesmere County: The Land, The Lake, And The People, 1864 - 1964*, Ellesmere County Council, Ellesmere, Canterbury, 1965, *passim*; O. A. Gillespie, *South Canterbury: A Record of Settlement*, South Canterbury Centennial History Committee, Timaru, 1958, *passim*; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1965, *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> LT, various dates, September 1868 – March 1869; Canterbury Rowing Club Minute Books, various dates 1868-9.



The conspicuous absence from Table 1.1 of members engaged in blue collar occupations is not simply an artefact of a reliance upon ‘class-biased’ sources in which working class people are all but invisible. The data presented in Tables 1.2 and 1.3, which were compiled from sources which facilitate the identification of manual workers, demonstrate that the number of working class members remained tiny after 1879. Consequently, because the factors which facilitated the participation of the working classes in sport were gaining strength, it is reasonable to conclude that the C.R.C. and any other clubs which contained few working class members after 1879 had very few or none during the preceding years.

The evidence presented in Table 1.2 indicates that the social structure of the C.R.C. changed very little throughout the next decade. Use of the *Electoral Rolls* published in 1879, which were the first set since those compiled in 1860 to include occupational information on voters, facilitated the accurate identification of forty-five of the seventy-four individuals who were registered as members during the 1879-80 season.

**TABLE 1.2**  
**CANTERBURY ROWING CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1879-80<sup>36</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	4
(b) Major rural proprietors	2
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	13
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	18
(b) Semi-professionals	2
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	3
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	2
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	1

<sup>36</sup> LT, various dates, September 1879 – March 1880; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Canterbury Rowing Club Minute Books, various dates, 1879-80.

Nineteen members were drawn from the élites. Twenty-three others were members of the middling classes, sixteen of them being employed in clerical positions. Only three were engaged in blue collar callings - a shipwright, a tailor and a cabman.<sup>37</sup>

Those who remain anonymous probably fall into two groups. The first consists of members who were under twenty-one years of age when the *Electoral Rolls* published in 1879 were in the process of being compiled. The second consists of those who were politically apathetic, or who were unable to meet the residence qualification for voting because they had recently changed address or led an itinerant way of life. Blue collar workers were probably somewhat over-represented in the latter group, at least until the late 1880s, but as argued in Appendix A, this over-representation can hardly have been great enough to cast doubt on the picture of elite and middling class dominance suggested by Table 1.2.

The data provided in Table 1.3 indicate that the C.R.C. remained almost exclusively an enclave of the élites and the middling classes throughout the 1880s. Sufficient information can be obtained, particularly from the *Electoral Rolls*, to permit the identification with reasonable precision of forty-three of approximately one hundred individuals listed as members during the 1889-90 season in the official history of the club.

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<sup>37</sup> LT, various dates, September 1879 – March 1880; *Electoral Rolls*, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Canterbury Rowing Club Minute Books, various dates, 1879-80.

**TABLE 1.3**  
**CANTERBURY ROWING CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1889-90<sup>38</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	5
(b) Major rural proprietors	1
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	7
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	20
(b) Semi-professionals	2
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	1
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	3
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	2
(b) Semi-skilled	1
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	1

Thirteen of those identified were drawn from the ranks of the élites. Among this body were the Surveyor of the City of Christchurch and three Anglican clergymen, including Bishop Churchill Julius. Twenty-six other members worked in various low white collar occupations, constituting an amalgam of clerks, semi-professionals and proprietors of small urban and rural enterprises. The remaining four were blue collar workers - an engineer, a compositor, a musician and a fishmonger's assistant.<sup>39</sup> Thus, the available information indicates that during the period before 1890 the membership of the Canterbury Rowing Club was drawn overwhelmingly from the urban and rural élites and the urban middling classes. It also indicates that between 1868-69 and 1889-90, white collar workers had become numerically dominant. Once more many members could not be identified, but for the reasons outlined in Appendix A this is most unlikely to threaten the overall conclusions suggested by the table.

Its elitism notwithstanding, the C.R.C. worked to become a competitive sporting entity. The number of members stabilised at approximately one hundred and fifty during the

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> LT, various dates, September 1889 – March 1890; J. O. Renaut, *The History of the Canterbury Rowing Club: Prepared for its 125th Anniversary, 1986-87*, Canterbury Rowing Club, Christchurch, 1987, *passim*; Electoral Rolls 1890, *passim*.

1870s. The club was not of itself very wealthy but was administered soundly, and able to purchase boats regularly from Salter of Oxford in England, and from builders in Melbourne, Sydney and Lyttelton.<sup>40</sup> Members also trained regularly and the representative crews were coached assiduously by Reverend Lingard until his departure for England in September 1870. The C.R.C. competed at almost every regatta, particularly from the mid-1870s under the energetic captaincy of J. O. Jones, though perhaps without achieving the level of success which might have been expected from a club of its comparative wealth and size.

'Open' clubs, such as the Union Rowing Club (U.R.C.) and Cure Boating Club, were more common in Canterbury. The U.R.C. was initially established in September 1864 as the Railway Rowing Club (R.R.C.) and membership was restricted to white collar employees of George Holmes and Company, the firm responsible for constructing and operating the rail system in Canterbury until July 1868. However, the R.R.C. was declared 'open to all comers' in August 1866, and any overt intimation of its origins was effectively removed in September 1869 when the name of the club was changed from Railway to Union.<sup>41</sup> The entrance fee was set at £1 1s from September 1876, a figure which was 'found beneficial and in no way deterrent to those desirous of becoming members.'<sup>42</sup> This assertion appears to have been accurate. The U.R.C. gradually evolved from a relatively small 'closed' club, the membership of which was drawn primarily from the urban élites and middling classes, into an 'open' club which attracted oarsmen from a wide variety of social backgrounds. Thus, while social composition of the U.R.C. altered over time the magnitude of this shift cannot be precisely ascertained because an indeterminate proportion of the membership of the club, particularly those who were young or blue collar, remains virtually invisible.

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<sup>40</sup> LT, 5 September 1870.

<sup>41</sup> LT, 17 September 1864; 30 August 1866; 2 September 1869.

<sup>42</sup> LT, 16 September 1876.

Table 1.4 contains information relating to forty-four individuals who can be positively identified among the fifty-seven members of the Union Rowing Club during the 1868-9 season. Twenty-six were members of the élites, constituting a miscellany of senior officials, proprietors of major rural and urban enterprises and managers of large commercial firms.

**TABLE 1.4**  
**UNION ROWING CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1868-69<sup>43</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	6
(b) Major rural proprietors	3
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	17
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	5
(b) Semi-professionals	2
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	11
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

Among the prominent members of the club involved in local government were Edward Jollie, the Provincial Secretary, Provincial Auditor John Marshman and John Ollivier, the Provincial Auditor. The eighteen remaining members were drawn from the middling classes and included clerical workers, the owners of small businesses and minor officials.<sup>44</sup>

The available evidence indicates that the social composition of the club changed significantly during the 1870s. The élites which formed the majority of the Club membership

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> LT, various dates, September 1868 – March 1869.

in the 1868-69 were no longer on the books a decade later. An exhaustive search of the relevant sources, especially the *Electoral Rolls*, yielded sufficient information to enable the identification of twenty-four of about seventy persons listed as members during the 1879-80 season. Five of those who have been identified were members of the urban élites, including two owners of large commercial enterprises and a Magistrate. Among the cluster of thirteen members drawn from the middling classes, five were petty urban proprietors and eight were employed in clerical positions. Six members were also employed in various blue collar vocations, both skilled and unskilled. The sextet consisted of an engineer, a carpenter, a bacon-curer, a labourer, a wool-sorter and a coachman. The extent to which the U.R.C. was an 'open' organisation is demonstrated by the fact that the coachman in its ranks was C. F. Bowley, one of the most active 'pedestrian' athletes in Christchurch. Nobody involved in such activities would have been allowed to join any club affiliated to the Amateur Rowing Association, which controlled amateur rowing in England during this period.

**TABLE 1.5**  
**UNION ROWING CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1879-80<sup>45</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	4
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	8
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	5
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	2
(b) Semi-skilled	1
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	3

<sup>45</sup> LT, various dates, September 1879 – March 1880; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*.

Based on the evidence available, the composition of the Union Rowing Club would appear to have stabilised during the 1880s. Only twenty-five from among a reported membership of 165 during the 1889-90 season can be definitely identified. In this particular instance, the problems of identification might be closely related to the large number of young members of all rowing clubs as noted in Illustration VIII. The three members included in the category of *élites* were all proprietors of major commercial enterprises. The most prominent of this group was John Anderson, owner of the largest iron foundry in Christchurch. The knot of sixteen members drawn from the ranks of the middling classes included ten who were employed in clerical positions and four who owned small businesses. Among the six employed in various blue collar jobs were a carpenter, a brassfounder, a paper-ruler, a coach-builder, a hotel employee and a warehouseman.

**TABLE 1.6**  
**UNION ROWING CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1889-90<sup>46</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	2
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	10
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	6
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	3
(b) Semi-skilled	2
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	1

<sup>46</sup>. LT, various dates, September 1889 – March 1890; Electoral Rolls, 1890, *passim*;

Thus, the social configuration of the U.R.C. changed significantly between 1870 and 1890. Like their counterparts at the Canterbury R.C. mentioned above, most of those members of the U.R.C. during the 1879-80 and 1889-90 seasons who remain anonymous were probably absent from the *Electoral Rolls* for the reasons elaborated in Appendix A.

The membership of the U.R.C. also increased in numerical terms from the late 1870s. Prior to the end of 1877 the club maintained a strength of approximately forty active and ten honorary members each season.<sup>47</sup> However, by August 1878 the total had increased to '71 as against 53 for last year'.<sup>48</sup> Two years later the 'rank and file' totalled 117, with forty-five new members having been elected during the preceding season.<sup>49</sup> By September 1890 the 'number on the roll' stood at 165, of whom 149 were 'active'.<sup>50</sup> Thus, within approximately twenty years the U.R.C. had developed, from a comparatively modest organisation which was dominated by members of the urban élite, into a large 'open' club which drew members from all occupational groups.

The Cure Boating Club was small, averaging fewer than twenty members in any season, and situated in Kaiapoi. It is noteworthy that the élites, clerks and salesmen were totally absent from the ranks of this diminutive club. Twelve of those who were members during the 1868-69 season can be positively identified. Six were the proprietors of small businesses in the town of Kaiapoi. This group consisted of two hotelkeepers, two storekeepers, a builder and a boat-builder. The two members who owned small rural

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<sup>47</sup> LT, 21 September 1872; 7 September 1875; 6 September 1877.

<sup>48</sup> LT, 31 August 1878.

<sup>49</sup> LT, 26 August 1880.

<sup>50</sup> LT, 18 September 1890.



enterprises were a sheepfarmer and a dairy farmer. Among the four employed in blue collar vocations were two blacksmiths, a carpenter and a bootmaker.<sup>51</sup> The nine members from the 1879-80 season who are identifiable consisted of a farmer, one who combined the occupations of breeder of Clydesdale horses and ploughman, another who worked as both farmer and butchery proprietor, a carpenter, an apprentice carpenter, a ropemaker, a wheelwright and two labourers.<sup>52</sup>

The C.B.C. also placed great emphasis upon remaining competitive. Kaiapoi was reputedly a hamlet in which 'every one appears ... to take a more than lively interest in boating matters'.<sup>53</sup> The inhabitants resembled their counterparts in many small towns throughout the north of England which Dunning and Sheard claim that as an expression of municipal pride, that their 'indigenous talent' be converted into an 'enthusiastic machine' capable of 'tussling with the best' in the relevant sport.<sup>54</sup> Whatever the ultimate motivating factor, the C.B.C. enjoyed success in competition out of all proportion to its size.

By contrast, the competitive ethos which prevailed within the metropolitan clubs in Canterbury was seldom sufficiently strong to induce their participation in regattas held outside the Province. Christchurch, wrote an anguished STROKE in 1876,

has not been represented at any of the interprovincial regattas for some years, whilst Auckland, Wellington, Hokitika, and even Kaiapoi - all of which towns possess rowing clubs vastly inferior to our own, both as to number of members and also number and quality of boats - have been represented on most, if not all, occasions.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *Canterbury*, *passim*.

<sup>52</sup> Electoral Rolls, 1879, *passim*; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *Canterbury*, *passim*.

<sup>53</sup> WP, 2 December 1871.

<sup>54</sup> E. Dunning and K. Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, Martin Robertson and Company Ltd., Oxford, 1979, p.148.

<sup>55</sup> LT, 22 November 1876.

Several determinants may have combined to produce this situation. STROKE allegedly asked a leading member of the Canterbury Rowing Club '(a good oarsman), why he did not form a crew for the interprovincial regatta' to be held in Nelson. The 'oarsman' replied, somewhat disingenuously in view of the energy expended by the C.R.C. at regattas held within Canterbury, that 'all he cared for was to take a quiet pull with his lady friends.'<sup>56</sup> This response indicates a simple reluctance to undertake arduous journeys in predominantly 'wind-driven coastal shipping' along the 'external and unreliable saltwater highway'<sup>57</sup> simply to row a couple of races in uncertain conditions. Any 'boating men' wishing to attend regattas in other Provinces would also presumably have experienced the same difficulties as cricketers in obtaining sufficient time away from work.

Moreover, as the letter from STROKE implies, the oarsmen of Canterbury considered that they constituted 'the strongest boating circle in New Zealand, both numerically and financially'.<sup>58</sup> A conviction probably took hold that, with rare exceptions such as the Star club in Wellington, the strongest opposition in the colony was to be found locally. The general acceptance of such a belief by 'Christchurch rowing men' may have curbed any inclination to go further afield in search of competition.

Finally, the expense inherent in transporting contestants and their craft around the Colony, which was undoubtedly heavy and unlikely to be recovered unless victory could be achieved, presumably constituted a significant disincentive to competition in other

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<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> A. Grey, *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 1994, p.166.

<sup>58</sup> LT, 23 November 1876.

Provinces.<sup>59</sup> The officials in charge of railways in Canterbury were usually willing to arrange the carriage of competitors and boats free of charge to events held within the Province, perhaps because the large number of passengers carried to and from regattas generated handsome profits. However, because they could expect no similar windfall in passenger traffic, the management of the private companies which operated the shipping services between the main centres of European population seldom proved so amenable in the matter of transporting crews and equipment from one part of New Zealand to a regatta held in another. Only when clubs accumulated sufficient wherewithal during the early 1880s did they regularly attempt to compete in regattas, or establish consistent rivalries with other clubs located in centres outside the Province.<sup>60</sup>

The financial constraints under which the rowing clubs of Canterbury operated before 1890 not only limited their ability to compete in other parts of the Colony but also constituted a threat to their survival and consequently stimulated them to be as successful as possible at regattas held within the Province. Indebtedness was common throughout the sport. The C.R.C. commenced the 1874-75 season with a mere 3d in the bank, and only the possession of assets with an estimated value of £550 lent the club the appearance of being 'in the black'. The Union club opened its season in 1876-77 with an overdraft of £48 2s, though it owned boats and sheds valued at £300. In February 1878 the debts of the U.R.C. amounted to £109 13s 2d, and these were not discharged until well into the following season.<sup>61</sup> The Cure Boating Club was at various times forced to borrow money from Charles Oram, the landlord of the Pier Hotel in Kaiapoi and a stalwart member of the club. At other times money was raised by 'disposing of sufficient of the club's property' and to raffling 'the boats Undine and

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<sup>59</sup> M. Crotty, 'Rowing in New Zealand to 1914: The Development of an Old World Sport in a New World Setting', B.A. (Hons) History Research Project, University of Canterbury, 1992, p.18.

<sup>60</sup> LT, 12 September 1885; 7 September 1886; *Press*, 18 September 1890.

<sup>61</sup> LT, 7 September 1874; 16 September 1876; 19 February 1878.

Cure for...£10' in order to avoid collapse.<sup>62</sup> 'There [is] no doubt,' G. H. Wearing told one meeting of nervous members, 'but every club in Canterbury [is] more or less dependent on its winnings at the regattas to help its finances out'.<sup>63</sup>

Clubs also attempted to avert insolvency and supplement any income derived from prize money won at regattas by holding 'entertainments,' which entailed members and their supporters acting, singing or playing 'musical selections' before audiences which were charged for admission. Such affairs were organised frequently throughout the 1860s and 1870s by the C.B.C., the Heathcote R.C., the U.R.C. and even the Canterbury R.C.<sup>64</sup> Though these theatrical events sometimes generated only limited financial returns, the C.R.C. organised a concert in 1872 which attracted approximately seven hundred people who paid either 1s to be seated in the stalls or 2s 6d for admission to the gallery.<sup>65</sup> Thus the situation of rowing clubs in Canterbury remained precarious and the majority were forced to resort to a variety of shifts and contrivances in order to survive until they began to accumulate substantial assets during late 1870s.

It was the regatta which, through the prize money offered in the various races, provided clubs with a major portion of their income and remained central to competitive rowing in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890<sup>66</sup>. Initially, as in Australia, regattas were viewed principally as festive occasions. In 1858 the *Lyttelton Times* described the Lyttelton Regatta as an 'annual festivity...originally held on the Queen's Birthday...rather than a

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<sup>62</sup> WP, 15 February 1871; 13 September 1873.

<sup>63</sup> WP, 7 July 1877.

<sup>64</sup> LT, 7 December 1868; 24, 28 October 1870; 13 March, 13 April, 17 May 1872; 7 September 1874, 4 November 1876.

<sup>65</sup> LT, 17 May 1872.

<sup>66</sup> Geoffrey T. Vincent, 'Sport, Class and Community in Canterbury, 1850-1880: The Evidence of Rowing' in Brad Patterson, ed., *Sport, Society & Culture in New Zealand*, Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, 1999, pp.157-64.

sporting event.’<sup>67</sup> Although after 1868 the ceremonial aspects of regattas were primarily confined to the various Opening Days of the rowing season in Lyttelton, Christchurch and Kaiapoi, they continued to serve as occasions for celebration. From the year of its resuscitation in 1862, the Lyttelton Regatta became the affair around which the port’s New Year’s Day celebrations centred. Despite the inconvenience of having to travel by rail from Christchurch to Ferrymead and either traverse the Port Hills or journey by sea around Bank’s Peninsula, growing numbers of ‘holiday people’ came from the city to participate in the revels.<sup>68</sup> The opening of the Lyttelton Railway Tunnel in December 1867 transformed the relative trickle into a flood. Just two weeks later ‘upwards of 3000 people came from Christchurch by train’ to enjoy the regatta of 1868. The number of visitors rose to almost six thousand in 1873, and over eight thousand in 1876.<sup>69</sup>

Though the Kaiapoi Regatta was held annually from 1868, it was never arranged to coincide with a specific holiday. The inaugural event was held on New Year’s Day in 1868, but that of 1872 was held on Boxing Day and those of 1875 and 1879 on St. Patrick’s Day. The regatta was usually arranged to ‘come off’ when a high tide on the Waimakariri River could be guaranteed.<sup>70</sup> The irregularity of its timing did not prevent the Kaiapoi Regatta from becoming one of the most popular annual sporting events in Canterbury. An estimated ‘1500 to 2000 spectators’ attended the regatta in 1868, and ‘about 1000’ in 1870. The opening of the rail link with Christchurch in April 1872 prompted the general belief in Kaiapoi that ‘the forthcoming regatta would be a very successful affair.’ This optimism was fully justified, for of the ‘2500 persons’ who visited the town 1,500 arrived by train.<sup>71</sup> The influx of pleasure seekers on these occasions more than doubled the population of the town, which stood at only

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<sup>67</sup> LT, 2 January 1858.

<sup>68</sup> LT, 2 January 1864; 3 January 1865; 5 January 1867.

<sup>69</sup> WP, 4 January 1873; 8 January 1876.

<sup>70</sup> WP, 26 October 1872; 20 March 1875.

<sup>71</sup> WP, 4 January 1868; 22 January 1870; 26 October, 28 December 1872.

868 in 1871 and 1002 in 1874. Newspaper reports of every regatta held thereafter emphasise the importance of the numerous spectators brought by the railway in making the event a success.

The timing of the Heathcote Regatta was similarly irregular. The 'great aquatic event of the Plains' was held at various times, including Boxing Day, Canterbury Anniversary Day and on any other day between mid-December and March considered convenient for the participants. Sited adjacent to the largest concentration of population in Canterbury, the regatta had a strong appeal. 'Christchurch seemed literally deserted yesterday,' wrote one reporter who attended the inaugural event,

and the officers of the railway have never had, and for some time perhaps never will have, so much work on their hands. Trains left the Christchurch station about every forty minutes, lodging their freight at the Heathcote ... The crush around the entrance of our station was painful to witness, and still more painful to experience.<sup>72</sup>

Having arrived at the site of the regatta the 'visitors ... swarmed upon the bridge and covered the hill side with picturesque and animated groups.'<sup>73</sup> However, by the late 1870s attendances at the regatta were declining in the face of competition from other public 'amusements of all kinds' which flourished in the metropolitan area.<sup>74</sup>

The factors which facilitated the development of regattas as important social events fall into two broad categories and, as will be shown in Chapter 2, closely resembled those

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<sup>72</sup> *Press*, 27 December 1864.

<sup>73</sup> *WP*, 22 December 1866.

<sup>74</sup> *WP*, 31 March 1877.

which encouraged the expansion of Popular and rural sports meetings. Firstly, steps were taken to encourage the participation of the greatest possible number of the population, 'especially the humbler classes', in the day's activities. A public holiday was usually arranged, either by the Provincial Government or by the local business community. Confectioners and publicans erected tents from which several varieties of 'refreshment' were available, and each invariably 'did a rattling business.' Brass bands were also ubiquitous.<sup>75</sup>

'There were also, as usual on such occasions', noted one observer,

several games, presided over by persons who made a profit out of the appetite for hazard, which, in some minds, seems to be almost as strong as that for food. Of these there was the once famous game of Cocksby, now growing venerable for its antiquity, and also a little obsolete, and the game of dice called "under and over seven," a game which, as it required no skill but only luck, was largely patronised. There was also the modern game of "Yankee Doodle," abundantly ornamented with stars and stripes.<sup>76</sup>

The boat races themselves 'excited a very large amount of ... speculation', with bets 'briskly laid, sweepstakes got up', and large amounts of money changing hands.<sup>77</sup> In addition programmes of rural sports and games, which offered entrants the chance to win substantial prizes in cash, were organised for both adults and children which was expected to lure a wide variety of competitors.

The Provincial élites were also attracted to regattas for a variety of reasons. Many of them were Englishmen of middle class background who had been involved in rowing 'at Home'.<sup>78</sup> The involvement of the economic, social and political élites was essential. These

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<sup>75</sup> LT, 29 May 1852; 28 May 1853; 31 May 1856; 2 January 1858; 2 January 1869; WP, 28 December 1867; 11 March 1876.

<sup>76</sup> LT, 18 December 1866.

<sup>77</sup> LT, 2 January 1869.

<sup>78</sup> LT, 28 September 1866.

groups arranged the public holidays, assisted with the organisation of the regatta along with most of its associated activities, and provided through public subscriptions the bulk of the funds required for the prizes and to defray general expenses. Being thus engaged in a regatta provided the élites with an opportunity to 'prove their credit while they took their pleasure.'<sup>79</sup> The Provincial élites may also have benefited from their involvement in regatta committees through the creation of new relationships which proved advantageous in other fields of endeavour, or the intensification of those previously established in the course of business, marriage or political activity.

Although the élite groups frequently predominated within the committees which organised regattas in Canterbury, pragmatism dictated that some members were drawn from other classes. The committee which administered the Lyttelton Regatta in 1869 consisted of thirty-one members, of whom twenty-two can be positively identified. Sixteen were members of the urban or rural élites. All, with the exception of the Harbour Master at Lyttelton, were the proprietors or managers of major commercial or agricultural enterprises. Five others were members of the middling classes, being either employed in low white-collar callings or the proprietors of small businesses. Only one member of the committee, a licensed waterman who worked at the port, can be identified as a blue-collar worker.<sup>80</sup>

The magnitude of the contribution made by any of these persons to the successful conduct of the regatta was not necessarily related to social status or occupation. Some were undoubtedly invited to join the committee because of their intimate knowledge of the conditions which prevailed on the harbour. George Messiter, the solitary professional waterman on the committee, and his colleague Thomas Ockford, who had followed the same

<sup>79</sup> S. Eldred-Grigg, *A Southern Gentry: New Zealanders Who Inherited the Earth*, John McIndoe Limited, Dunedin, 1982, p.82; LT, 31 January 1863; 12 March 1864.

<sup>80</sup> MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *Canterbury*, *passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*.



calling at Lyttelton for several years before becoming a publican at Akaroa, presumably offered invaluable advice on the design of the courses over which the various events were to be held. Thus practical considerations determined that the Lyttelton Regatta committee would be composed of men drawn from a range of occupational backgrounds.

The situation remained constant over time, though the scale and importance of the undertaking increased dramatically. The committee which organised the Lyttelton Regatta in 1880 consisted of one hundred and nine members, ninety-three of whom can be identified with certainty. Seventy-five were members of the élites, constituting a melange of 'major proprietors, managers and high ranking officials.'<sup>81</sup> Fifteen others were drawn from the middling classes, being either the owners of small businesses or individuals pursuing a range of clerical vocations. Only three members can be linked to blue-collar occupations. The number of those invited to join the committee because their participation would be of direct benefit to the regatta, and the variety of their occupations, increased dramatically. Among the members were seven Master Mariners, two Harbour Masters, two 'master stevedores', a marine pilot, a ships' chandler, a journalist and William Reeves, the proprietor of the *Lyttelton Times* and an enthusiastic supporter of sport in Canterbury.<sup>82</sup>

The committees which organised the regattas held annually at Kaiapoi were generally dominated by local businessmen, though they also contained a higher proportion of members who were selected because of their evident utility than the analogous bodies at Lyttelton. This latter circumstance arose principally because the committees at Kaiapoi were chosen from a comparatively small population. The committee which arranged the Kaiapoi Regatta in 1869

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<sup>81</sup> C. Toynbee, 'Class and Social Structure in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', NZJH, Vol.13, No.1, April 1979, p.73.

<sup>82</sup> LT, various dates, November – December 1880; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs, passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II, passim*.

consisted of sixteen members, eleven of whom can be positively identified. Three, including two professionals and an official, were drawn from the ranks of the *élites*. However, the status of the 'professional' in Kaiapoi was not comparable to the status of the leading professionals in Christchurch. Kaiapoi did not have an cadre of *élites* corresponding to the one in Christchurch. None the less there were no doubt, some big farmers in the surrounding districts. The remaining eight members consisted of five petty urban proprietors, the owner of a small sheep farm, the manager of the local branch of a bank and a municipal official.<sup>83</sup> At least five of the committee were selected primarily because their skills and experience could be used to immediate advantage in the organisation of the regatta. All were active members of the Cure Boating Club in Kaiapoi and therefore familiar with the course on the highly unpredictable and flood-prone Waimakariri River over which the regatta was rowed.

Twenty-two members served on the committee which managed the regatta in 1880. All but one can be definitely identified. Five members were drawn from the various groups within the *élites*. Twelve others were from the middling classes, constituting an amalgam of petty urban and rural proprietors and minor officials. Three of the committee were employed in skilled blue collar trades, while the remaining two laboured in unskilled blue collar vocations. Practical concerns appear to have played a significant part in the selection of three members who were employed in various occupational categories. J. Lowthian Wilson, the journalist and agent in the Kaiapoi district for *The Press* newspaper, was especially useful for the opportunities at his disposal to keep the regatta and those involved in its organisation before the public. Equally serviceable was R. H. Mathews, one of the leading boat-builders in Canterbury, who had constructed craft for most of the clubs in the Province at his yard in Kaiapoi. Finally, Frederick Pearce, a carpenter with experience in the construction of boats,

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<sup>83</sup> LT, various dates, November – December 1869; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II, passim*.

appears to have possessed abilities which were particularly valuable to the committee.<sup>84</sup> Thus, many individuals were able to make a practical contribution to the successful conduct of a regatta irrespective of their social status or occupation.

The involvement of political leaders also facilitated the development of regattas as important social events. From the late 1870s the committees which arranged the regatta at Lyttelton routinely included at least one MHR and the Mayors of Akaroa, Christchurch, Kaiapoi and Sydenham. Among those who inevitably served on the corresponding bodies at Kaiapoi were the Mayor and the Town Clerk, while Dr. Charles Dudley, the ‘uncrowned king of Kaiapoi’, served as Commodore until his death in 1884. A commitment on the part of the leaders and agencies of government, whether local, Provincial or General, implied that the regatta had become established as an important social institution. From the early 1860s the Superintendent of the Province filled the highest post in both the Lyttelton and Heathcote Regattas, thus acting either as Patron or Commodore, and the Provincial Government subsidised those held at Lyttelton and Kaiapoi.<sup>85</sup> The railways, under the control of both the Provincial and General Governments, organised more frequent services on regatta days, offered heavily discounted fares and occasionally carried without charge the boats belonging to competitors.<sup>86</sup>

It is likely that the involvement of the political élites was motivated to some extent by self-interest. Individuals holding or running for elected office may have been tempted to associate themselves with the organisation of sporting activities which brought enjoyment to thousands at least in part by the desire to portray themselves to the public as benefactors and

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<sup>84</sup> LT, various dates, November – December 1880; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury*, *passim*; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*.

<sup>85</sup> WP, 26 September 1874; 4 March 1876.

<sup>86</sup> WP, 31 December 1870; WP, 6 December 1879.

thereby gain some advantage over their opponents. In an unusually overt display of such behaviour W. S. Moorhouse and J. D. Lance, two of the rival candidates for the Superintendency of Canterbury in 1866, respectively offered prizes of £15 and £10 to be competed for in events open only to watermen at the Lyttelton Regatta.<sup>87</sup> Most politicians in Canterbury during the period before 1890 appear to have been more circumspect in attempting to garner support through their involvement in regattas or other popular sporting events.

An increasing number of individuals with experience in the management of rail transport were invited to join the committee which arranged the Lyttelton Regatta. These experts were initially drawn from private companies and later from the responsible organs of the state. Few people were more conversant with the railways in Canterbury in 1869 than the contractor George Holmes and the runholder Edward Richardson who were partners in the firm which had originally constructed and managed the entire enterprise, including the Lyttelton tunnel.<sup>88</sup> The presence of Holmes and Richardson on the executive was an overt acknowledgement by the remaining members of the growing importance of the 'steam-horse'<sup>89</sup> as a means of carrying competitors and spectators between Christchurch and the port. A decade later the Lyttelton Regatta committee contained at least seven men who were then, or had previously been, heavily involved in the management of the railways in Canterbury. This group included the Commissioner of New Zealand Railways in the South Island, the General Manager of the N.Z.R. in Canterbury, the first General Manager of the defunct Canterbury Provincial Railways, the leading civil and mechanical engineers, and the clerks

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<sup>87</sup> LT, 23 December 1865.

<sup>88</sup> W. A. Pierre, *Canterbury Provincial Railways: Genesis of the N.Z.R. System*, The New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society Inc., Wellington, 1964, pp.24-6; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, pp.151-5.

<sup>89</sup> Pierre, *Canterbury Provincial Railways*, p.56.

who organised tickets at the stations in Christchurch and Lyttelton.<sup>90</sup> The inclusion in the committee of such a comprehensive array of expertise in the organisation of rail transport clearly demonstrated how central the railways had become to the success of the regatta by 1880.

The majority of those who organised the various regattas apparently believed that competitors were motivated by the desire to obtain material rewards, rather than by the conviction that 'victory should be its own reward'.<sup>91</sup> Although purses had been competed for ever since aquatic sports had been established in Canterbury with the first Lyttelton Regatta in 1851, the offer of trophies and cash prizes grew apace from 1864. The programme for the Heathcote Regatta in that year listed nine events, and the prizes amounted to £71 in cash and £40 in trophies. The value of individual awards ranged from £2 to £25. In 1877 the committee organised six races, for which money prizes to the amount of £52 and three cups of indeterminate but considerable value were offered.<sup>92</sup> The inaugural Kaiapoi Regatta consisted of only five races. The aggregate value of the prizes was £36 10s, including cups worth £5. Single prizes varied between £1 10s and £20. By 1875 the programme had been expanded to include seven races, and the sum offered in prize money totalled over £80. Prizes were worth a minimum of £2 10s and a maximum of £25.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, the incidence of fouling appears to have increased over time, particularly in races for which large purses were offered.<sup>94</sup> This tendency apparently caused concern in some quarters, for appended to the

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<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, pp.24-6; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*.

<sup>91</sup> E. Halladay, 'Of Pride and Prejudice: The Amateur Question in English Nineteenth-Century Rowing', *IJHS*, Vol.4, No.1, May 1987, p 43.

<sup>92</sup> *Press*, 21 December 1864; *WP*, 31 March 1877.

<sup>93</sup> *WP*, 4 January 1868; 20 March 1875.

<sup>94</sup> *Press*, 3 January 1865; *LT*, 23 December 1865; 10 January 1868; 4 January 1869.

rules of the second Heathcote Regatta is a definition of fouling which resembles a catalogue of the sharp practices for which professional scullers were notorious in England.<sup>95</sup>

As in Australia, the organisers of regattas in Canterbury encouraged the participation of those who earned their living by the oar through the creation of events designated as being for watermen and 'open to all comers'. Entry to other races was restricted to amateurs or youths under a nominated age.<sup>96</sup> Thus the 'amateur' competitors, increasingly associated with rowing clubs, were carefully separated from the 'professionals'. Organisers were probably motivated in their actions by the wish to make regattas as socially inclusive as possible, but shared the prevailing belief in English rowing that those who rowed for pleasure and exercise should be 'protected' from the rigours of competition with others who rowed for a living.

This attempt to keep a distance between the two categories of oarsmen reflected an underlying hostility among amateurs towards their 'professional' counterparts. 'Amateur' oarsmen attempted on two occasions to improve their own chances of winning valuable trophies and rich prize money by seeking to have rules introduced under which 'professionals' would be eliminated from competition. The definition of a 'professional' which was espoused in the first instance differs markedly from that adopted six years later. In September 1866 the Heathcote Regatta Committee proposed inaugurating an 'Interprovincial Champions Race' for amateur coxed fours, for which a trophy worth £50 and prize money of 100 sovereigns would be awarded. The committee resolved, on the motion of John Ollivier, that 'no person should be considered an amateur for the Heathcote inter-provincial match of 1866, who had plied for hire, or been professionally engaged as a waterman, within six months from the date of entry.' A 'memorial' protesting against this interpretation was

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<sup>95</sup> LT, 13 December 1865.

<sup>96</sup> WP, 5 January 1867; 26 December 1868; 22 January 1870; 25 March 1876.

subsequently addressed to the committee by 'most of the rowing men in Christchurch, including many who have belonged to the two University clubs and other principal rowing clubs in England.' The petitioners declared that 'no person should be considered an 'amateur' who has ever held a waterman's license or plied for hire' and implored the committee to reconsider its decision. Opinions were expressed in the newspapers that the committee's definition would be entirely unacceptable at Henley or in 'the amateur races on the Thames', and that it would 'admit a great many ... professional men ... and no doubt deter amateurs from other provinces from entering the race.' However, the committee was unmoved and the conditions of the race remained largely unaltered.<sup>97</sup>

The basis of this hostility emerged only in February 1872, when the Regatta again became the centre of controversy. There appeared on the programme an event for a 'Pair-oared Race' which was open to all members of Rowing Clubs in the Province of Canterbury 'who do not get their living by bodily labour'. The Challenge Cup was offered by W.C. Maxwell, Esq. and valued at £18 10s.<sup>98</sup> Maxwell's belatedly announced intention was to induce the office-bound members of boating clubs to become more active in the sport by providing an event in which they could gain the confidence required to confront the 'experienced oarsmen whom they ... think so formidable.'<sup>99</sup> Although the identical event had aroused no comment in 1871, an acrimonious discussion now erupted in the letters pages of the local newspapers over the fairness or otherwise of a 'mechanics's rule.' An outraged *Cantab* thought that,

strictly interpreting the conditions laid down, no mortal creature will be able to compete. Bank and merchants' and

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<sup>97</sup> WP, 6, 20 October; LT, 28 September 1866.

<sup>98</sup> LT, 5 February 1872.

<sup>99</sup> LT, 13 February 1872.

Government clerks form the bulk of the clubs. Are *they* excluded? ... Is Jack Deal, carpenter, who undoubtedly gets his living by "bodily labour," to be excluded, while Septimus Noodle, Esq., who gets his living by mechanically copying a few figures into a ledger - under constant supervision - is admitted? ... Both get their living by "bodily labour," with this difference - Jack Deal requires brains for his work, while Septimus Noodle, Esq., requires none...<sup>100</sup>

If the rule had been formulated to exclude crews comprising working-class oarsmen, then 'farewell all good feeling, farewell the cultivation of manly sports merely for their own sake, and farewell that fairplay itself which Englishmen boast so much about.' 'Let there be no CLASS restrictions,' demanded Cantab, 'let it not go out to the world that we are tainted with SNOBOCRACY.'<sup>101</sup>

While some endorsed "Cantab's" view, others supported the introduction of a 'mechanic's rule.' 'Is there no difference,' asked *Cantabury*, 'between the physical power' of clerical workers 'who can only steal the night and morning hours for practice, and the hardy sons of toil', particularly watermen, whose muscles are strengthened by repetitive physical labour? *Cantabury*'s 'hardy son of toil' was

what is commonly understood by the word "handicraftsman" - a man who obtains his living by manual labour, such as carpenters, boat-builders, licensed watermen, builders, founders, and the like - men skilled in muscular and mechanical or manual and bodily labour.<sup>102</sup>

A crew composed of manual labourers should not be permitted to enter the race, for they would certainly defeat any drawn from 'men cooped up in their offices'. Such an outcome, said *Cantabury*, would frustrate Maxwell's intention of providing that category of oarsmen

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<sup>100</sup> LT, 5 February 1872.

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> LT, 8 February 1872 (*italicised name in original*).



who had 'done the most for...boating in Canterbury' with a prize for which only they might compete. The exercise of common sense in deciding whether any particular individual was a 'handicraftsman' would ensure that 'we need be under no serious apprehension of finding crews enough to compete'. He accused *Cantab* of pandering to 'the 'Jack Deals',' and endeavouring 'to create a schism between the classes where none exists - to foment ill-feeling where harmony and good-will do and should ever prevail'.<sup>103</sup>

'One of the Soft-Handed' attacked the rationale underpinning the 'mechanic's rule.' He considered 'that men employed in banks or other offices, who have more time to practise [and] go to their evening exercise comparatively fresh, instead of being tired out after a long day of manual labour, have rather an advantage over carpenters and other mechanics.' 'True,' he admitted, 'their hands may not be as hard, but their muscles can be as strong if they will train properly, for which they have more time and opportunity than the mechanics.'<sup>104</sup> Some oarsmen were confused. One wished to know whether, 'being a shopkeeper, I would be allowed to form one of a competing crew? I don't know whether I get my living by "bodily labour" or not.'<sup>105</sup> These views were prompted by a social reality in which the liberal notion of equal opportunity was not hampered by the English type upper classes.

The tumult eventually subsided and the race was rowed under the conditions originally laid down by Maxwell, though the inflammatory restriction was quietly dropped from the conditions of entry at later Heathcote Regattas.<sup>106</sup> The entire episode was probably an attempt by Maxwell to 'smuggle' in a ban on a 'class' (those who live by 'bodily labor') with the justification of defending 'inexperienced' oarsmen against 'experienced' oarsmen.

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<sup>103</sup> LT, 6 February 1872.

<sup>104</sup> LT, 9 February 1872.

<sup>105</sup> LT, 7 February 1872.

<sup>106</sup> Another possible reason might have been to exclude crews from the highly competitive Cure Boating Club, the only club in Canterbury which contained significant numbers of blue collar workers.

During the 1880s the definitions of amateurism became less ambiguous. The strength of opinion which existed on this issue in the various Provinces became abundantly clear in the mid- and late 1880s during the 'often bitter and acrimonious process' of establishing the New Zealand Amateur Rowing Association (N.Z.A.R.A.).<sup>107</sup>

Those who sought to establish the N.Z.A.R.A. were motivated by both theoretical and practical considerations. An official of the Otago club wrote in February 1887 that

I think the time has arrived when steps should be taken to form a Boating Association for New Zealand, with the view of deciding upon a class of boat for Interprovincial races, also to fix where same races shall be held from time to time, taking Auckland at the one end and Invercargill at the other, and, altogether, to stimulate boating in New Zealand.<sup>108</sup>

However, many advocates of the N.Z.A.R.A. sought primarily to create a body which would draw up a set of rules, and to ensure that the new code was uniformly enforced throughout the Colony. They wanted the rules to be based on a definition of amateurism more rigid than that formulated in Canterbury in 1866. Martin Crotty observes that, as in England, a feeling had become widespread within aquatics by the mid-1880s 'that rowing for financial gain was a debasement of the sport.' Moreover, the hope evidently existed that the introduction of more restrictive rules relating to amateurism would prohibit competitors from organising sweepstakes and making side-wagers. Such legislation would not only remove another of the means by which formally organised rowing could be used by participants as a source of monetary rewards, but would also eliminate the possibility of bookmakers exerting a corrupting influence over races and regattas.<sup>109</sup> The desire to curb betting in aquatics was

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<sup>107</sup> Crotty, 'Rowing in New Zealand to 1914', p.28.

<sup>108</sup> *ibid.*, appendix 16, p.53.

<sup>109</sup> *ibid.*, p.28.

almost certainly analogous to wider public opinion during the period which, as the passage into law of the Gaming and Lotteries Act in 1881 demonstrated, was gradually hardening against gambling in sport.<sup>110</sup> Finally, the architects of the N.Z.A.R.A. shared the belief expressed by Maxwell and his partisans that 'it was ... necessary to exclude professionals [in order] to give amateurs a realistic chance [of] winning.'<sup>111</sup> The process of constituting a body which would meet all of these expectations proved troublesome.

Although the creation of a body which would govern rowing throughout the Colony was urged by the Wanganui Rowing Club in 1879, no effort was made to bring such an organisation into existence for almost ten more years. The Star Rowing Club of Wellington had taken what proved to be the initial step in formulating a definition of an amateur which would be accepted throughout the Colony when, on 2 January 1886, a meeting of the club resolved

1. That it is advisable to define an amateur as one who has not rowed for money for himself or made any pecuniary profit from prize money.
2. That this club ought to compete in no races which are not confined to amateurs as before stated.
3. That boating clubs in other districts be requested to adopt these restrictions.<sup>112</sup>

This ruling was not intended to apply until the following season. In the meantime, the Star Rowing Club drafted an even more restrictive definition on 5 August 1886 which decreed that

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<sup>110</sup> The Gaming and Lotteries Act, 1881, ostensibly outlawed all lotteries and sweepstakes offering cash prizes and all 'gaming or betting houses'. Penalties for breaches of the Act ranged from fines of £200 to jail sentences of up to six months. However, the activities of bookmakers remained outside the scope of the Act, in the erroneous belief that they would be forced out of business by the new totalisators. Gambling on professional sport was also proscribed, but promoters 'ignored the new legislation with impunity'; D. Grant, *On A Roll: A History of Gambling and Lotteries in New Zealand*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1994, pp.52-3, 55.

<sup>111</sup> Crotty, 'Rowing in New Zealand to 1914', p.28.

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, p.29.

an amateur oarsman or sculler must be a paying member of a recognised rowing club which has been in existence for at least six months, and numbers not less than 20 subscribing members, and must have derived no pecuniary profit - either directly or indirectly - from rowing or sculling in races, or from the funds of his club.

The rules of both the Canterbury and Union Rowing Clubs reportedly contained similar definitions. However, many other clubs considered a definition which was retrospective in nature to be unfair, presumably because they did not want oarsmen who had previously competed at regattas for cash prizes in events designated as open only to amateurs to be subsequently punished as professionals. These clubs wanted the requirements of the law to apply only from the date of its actual adoption. Consequently, a serious conflict developed as several clubs in Wellington, Wanganui and Nelson adopted 'non-retrospective definitions'. The Star Rowing Club refused to compete at regattas organised by or otherwise involving these bodies, or to allow them to compete in events conducted under its own auspices. Thus, the possibility existed that the rowing clubs of New Zealand would form themselves into two mutually exclusive bodies, each constructed around its own definition of amateurism.<sup>113</sup>

Early in 1887 the Star Rowing Club called a meeting of those clubs which adopted its definition of an amateur 'for the purpose of setting up the N.Z.A.R.A.' Of the fifteen clubs which conformed to this requirement, eleven were represented at the gathering which took place in Wellington on 16 March 1887. A dispute erupted between the Star Rowing Club and those clubs which had adopted its definition in good faith, and the remainder which had done so only in order to enable them to attend the meeting. The refusal of the chairman of the meeting to permit renewed debate on the definition of an amateur caused the assembly to

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<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*, p.29.

dissolve in acrimony, and there ensued almost a year of strife which was characterised by ‘a great deal of abuse and misrepresentation’.<sup>114</sup> A rapprochement was ultimately concluded when a further meeting of the N.Z.A.R.A. held in Christchurch on 26 January 1888. It was resolved that the rule on amateurism should be amended to include the provision ‘that the Committee of the Association may, for good cause shown, reinstate as an amateur any oarsman who may have infringed the above rule.’<sup>115</sup> This measure proved to be a satisfactory basis for compromise, and by 1893 all of the important rowing clubs in the Colony had become affiliated to the Association. Further amendments were made in 1892 in order to prohibit participation in any competition involving professionals, and to ‘explicitly authorise the practice or rowing for prize money’ which was subsequently passed to the club.<sup>116</sup>

The definition of an amateur adopted by the N.Z.A.R.A. differed significantly from those ratified by the two associations which controlled amateur rowing in England. Firstly, an amateur oarsman in New Zealand was not prohibited from being a ‘professional’ in another sport. Secondly, the rules of the N.Z.A.R.A. permitted an oarsman to be ‘employed in or about boats for money or wages’ and remain an amateur in good standing. Consequently, watermen, boat-builders and fishermen throughout the Colony were free to participate in their local rowing clubs and regattas. Perhaps the most significant difference was that the rules formulated by the Colonial body concerning amateurism did not contain a ‘mechanics’ clause’ of the type which had caused such damage to the sport in England. Thus, amateur aquatics in New Zealand remained open to men of all classes and occupations.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> E. C. Batkin, *The New Zealand Rowing Almanac and Oarsman's Companion*, 1887, Edwards and Co., Wellington, 1887, p.32, in M. Crotty, ‘Rowing in New Zealand to 1914’, p.30.

<sup>115</sup> Crotty, ‘Rowing in New Zealand to 1914’, p.30.

<sup>116</sup> *ibid.*, p.31.

<sup>117</sup> *ibid.*, p.34.

Rowing in Canterbury remained by 1890 was distinct from the sport which existed in England and Australia as it had at the first Lyttelton Regatta of 1851. Firstly, the professional sculling which was a key element of aquatics in England and New South Wales failed to develop in Canterbury. The Province lacked the necessary financial resources, favourable geography and extensive corps of skilled vocational oarsmen. Secondly, although a degree of friction existed between 'amateurs' and 'professionals' in Canterbury, it never assumed the proportions of the disputes which plagued English and Australian rowing. Consequently the regattas which were central to competitive rowing in the Province remained 'inclusive' in nature, whereas entry to comparably prestigious events in Melbourne or at Henley was increasingly restricted to amateurs. Conversely, rowing as it developed in Canterbury during this period bore a close resemblance in some respects to aquatics in England and the Australian Colonies. Both regattas and clubs were characterised by a high degree of organisation, being administered by elected officers and committees according to carefully formulated and complex sets of rules. Moreover, the careful and imaginative management of the rapidly expanding network of railways ensured that the principal regattas became important social and sporting occasions, each of them attracting thousands of people. Thus, rowing became, if not as claimed by 'Tom Try' the 'truly national sport in this part of New Zealand',<sup>118</sup> then certainly one of the foremost sporting activities in Canterbury during the Colonial period. Perhaps only the various Popular, rural, Friendly Society and Caledonian sports meetings organised throughout the Province were of greater significance during the years before 1890.

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<sup>118</sup> LT, 24 September 1868.

# ***BRITONS OUT FOR A HOLIDAY***



***RURAL, POPULAR,  
AND CALEDONIAN SPORTS  
IN COLONIAL CANTERBURY***

*CHAPTER 2*  
*'BRITONS OUT FOR A HOLIDAY' :1*  
*RURAL, POPULAR, AND CALEDONIAN SPORTS*  
*IN COLONIAL CANTERBURY*

'A predilection for athletic sports', opined the *Weekly Press* in 1870, 'is ... thoroughly imbued in the minds of Englishmen'. Thus, it was hardly remarkable that given 'the thoroughly English character of Canterbury', which distinguished the Province from all others in New Zealand, 'we should delight in exhibitions' of athletic prowess. Consequently, athletic sports festivals 'are always keenly enjoyed by the public, and the capabilities and performances of each of the competitors in the various events criticised closely.'<sup>2</sup> Among the sports examined in this thesis, only regattas attracted crowds of similar proportions to those which attended the Popular, Caledonian and Friendly Society sports meetings organised in Christchurch and some of the smaller centres in Canterbury before 1890.

Athletics in England evolved from rusticity to urban sophistication within a relatively short period. Athletic sports were an integral element of the boisterous festivals, or 'wakes', held annually in rural parishes throughout England until at least the 1850s. The wake also included such rural sports as

the wheelbarrow race (while blindfolded), a smock race for the women ... hot hasty-pudding eating, grinning through a horse collar (the funniest won), chasing a greased pig, running in sacks, or smoking pipes of tobacco; at some wakes bull-baiting, cock-fighting or badger-baiting were featured.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> LT, 27 December 1877.

<sup>2</sup> WP, 24 December 1870.

<sup>3</sup> R. W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1973, pp.16-20.



Often there were itinerant musicians who played for those wishing to dance and stalls selling confectionery and fruit. Local publicans frequently provided 'prizes to be contended for by athletic exercises or rustic sports.' The wake fostered a sense of community for, as Robert Malcolmson observes, this 'was the time when scattered friends and relations were accustomed to assemble ... in order to reaffirm their social ties.'<sup>4</sup>

Athletics in Canterbury took a variety of forms between 1850 and 1890 almost all of which served, like regattas, as occasions for celebration and for social interaction. Foremost among athletic contests from the early 1860s were the 'Rural Sports' meetings held in many settlements throughout Canterbury to mark the Anniversary Day of the Province, Boxing Day or New Year's Day. The earliest events were staged in the hamlets of north Canterbury. Rural sports were inaugurated at Kaiapoi in 1862, and by 1868 Saltwater Creek, Leithfield, Oxford, Woodend and Rangiora had all followed suit. The organisation of sports meetings commenced later and spread more slowly among the towns located between the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers. A joint sports meeting involving the Templeton and Prebbleton districts was held in January 1867. However, the sports held at Doyleston in January 1871, and those at Lincoln and Southbridge in January 1872, were the first in central Canterbury to be established on a permanent basis and regularly scheduled for the purpose of celebrating a specific holiday. Only in December 1868, after an apparently widespread indifference among the public had undermined previous efforts on the Anniversary Days of 1864 and 1865, was a regular rural sports meeting established in Christchurch.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> LT, 16 January 1862; 29 December 1865; 8 January, 20 December 1866; 8 January 1867; 4 January 1869; WP, 22 December 1866, 5 January 1867.

Similar in character to these athletic festivals were the gatherings organised by the Friendly Societies in Christchurch and other centres throughout Canterbury. Though arranged by private bodies, they provided the general population with ample opportunity to participate as competitors or spectators. The extent to which those outside the ranks of the Friendly Societies could try their luck as contestants varied. The inaugural sports arranged by the 'Loyal City of Christchurch Lodge, No. 4602', of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows (M.U.I.O.O.F.), were held on Boxing Day 1873. In only four of the eighteen scheduled events was entry confined to members of the order.<sup>6</sup> The programme of the 'annual fete' of the Ancient Order of Foresters', run on Boxing Day in 1877, featured twenty-one contests. Entry in five instances was restricted to Foresters or their sons. Three other events were variously confined to members of the Fire Brigades, the Volunteer Fire Police and Friendly Societies in general.<sup>7</sup>

Members of the public were also generally able to compete in the sports arranged by 'Lodges' or 'Courts' of Friendly Societies which had been established in towns outside Christchurch. The programme of the 'Temuka Annual Sports', which were conducted 'Under the Auspices of the Alexandrovna Lodge, I.O.O.F.' on Boxing Day in 1876, contained seventeen events for men, girls and boys. Entry to each contest was open to anyone who conformed to the relevant criteria with regard to age and sex, and who paid whatever entrance fee was demanded.<sup>8</sup> The annual sports organised by the Ancient Order of Foresters in Timaru on Boxing Day in 1884 consisted of fourteen events. In only one case was entry limited to members of the Order.<sup>9</sup> Thus, throughout the 1870s and 1880s the Friendly Societies in

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<sup>6</sup> LT, 20 December 1873.

<sup>7</sup> LT, 18 December 1877.

<sup>8</sup> TH, 16, 28 December 1876.

<sup>9</sup> TH, 27 December 1884; 28 February 1885.

Canterbury adopted a liberal attitude towards participation in the athletic 'fetes' which they organised.<sup>10</sup>

The degree to which 'outsiders' were able to compete in the athletic gatherings arranged by the Caledonian Societies which flourished in Christchurch, Rangiora, Timaru, Ashburton and Waimate during this period was more limited. Entry to standard athletic contests appears, in almost every instance, to have been open to all comers. Admission to those items on a programme which were 'more peculiarly Scotch',<sup>11</sup> such as the 'Best Dressed Highlander', the 'Sword Dance' and the 'Highland Fling', was not explicitly restricted to persons of Scottish descent. However, the necessity for contestants to possess specific knowledge or skills constituted an informal barrier to admission. Approximately thirty percent of the events at any annual gathering organised by a Caledonian Society in Canterbury were 'peculiarly Scotch' in nature, and were occasionally arranged in a separate category under the rubric of 'Highland Competition'.<sup>12</sup> Thus, notwithstanding the inclusion of a percentage of 'exclusive' events, the athletic fetes organised by the Friendly and Caledonian Societies were generally very similar in character to the more general rural sports meetings held throughout Canterbury.

Nevertheless, the meetings organised by both sets of organisations possessed some distinctive attributes. Each was usually preceded by an elaborate and colourful procession, consisting of members of the order under whose auspices it was organised, through the town to the venue at which the sports were being staged. Every such pageant departed from a selected point in the relevant town, proceeding by way of the local railway station where

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<sup>10</sup> TH, 27 December 1881; 27 December 1883; 29 December 1885.

<sup>11</sup> LT, 3 January 1882.

visiting members of the order from lodges elsewhere in Canterbury were met and escorted to the trysting place. The sports meetings of the Friendly Societies held throughout the Province were also distinguished by their frequent transaction on private grounds to which a charge could be, and was, made for admission. The Ancient Order of Foresters variously used the paddock in Cashel Street owned by publican J. O. Sheppard and, later, the grounds of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association of Canterbury. Their counterparts in the M.U.I.O.O.F. favoured the paddock in Cashel Street owned by John Anderson, the iron founder. Both organisations charged 1s for admission, though children were usually exempted from paying. Tickets could be purchased in advance, or at the gate on the day of the sports. Profits, which could be considerable, were devoted to the benevolent work of the society.<sup>13</sup>

The Friendly Societies were forced by circumstances to ensure that the sports meetings conducted under their auspices returned a profit. Prior to the provision of the unemployment benefit or other forms of assistance by the state, friendly societies offered the skilled workers who could afford regular subscriptions a comprehensive form of insurance against the disastrous consequences which frequently befell wage earners who suffered illness or accident.<sup>14</sup> The societies provided a range of benefits, primarily for funerals and temporary incapacities, though they also lent money for the purchase of houses and the expansion of businesses. The brotherhood of these organisations also engaged in philanthropic activities in support of distressed members, their families, and the widows and orphans of deceased members.<sup>15</sup> Given that the Friendly Societies bore a heavy burden of

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<sup>12</sup> LT, 3 January, 18 December 1882; 18 December 1883; 17 December 1884; TH, 4 December 1876; 2 January 1879; 1, 2 January 1880; 1 January, 27 December 1881; 3 January 1882; 2 January 1884; 13 August, 10 September, 28 December 1885; 2, 4 January 1886.

<sup>13</sup> LT, 20, 27 December 1873; 28 December 1875; 18, 27 December 1877; 27 December 1878; WP, 2 January 1875; 30 December 1876.

<sup>14</sup> J. Carlyon, 'Friendly Societies 1842-1938: The Benefits of Membership', NZJH, Vol.32, No.2, October 1998, p.124.

<sup>15</sup> E. Olssen, *Building the New World: Work, Politics and Society in Caversham, 1880s-1920s*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1995, pp.36-8.

responsibility, while remaining 'financially unsound'<sup>16</sup> throughout the period before 1915, any profits which they might derive from annual athletic fetes were of considerable significance.

Caledonian Societies throughout Canterbury also made extensive use of privately owned venues which could be enclosed. The Canterbury Caledonian Society (C.C.S.), which was established in Christchurch on 6 March 1882, was among the very first organisations to utilise the facilities offered at Lancaster Park. On 14 August 1882 the Society signed an agreement with the 'Directors of the C[anterbury] Cricket and Athletic Sports Ground Co[mpan]y. ... to have the use of the Lancaster Park Ground on the 16th December for the next five years, for the purpose of holding their Sports'. The 'rent' to be paid was fixed at 'Twenty per centum of the Entrance money at the Gates and Pavilion, and [the same percentage of the] Booth money.'<sup>17</sup> A charge of one shilling was imposed by the Society for admission to the ground. The only persons to be admitted free of charge were members of the C.C.S. and, from December 1883, the 'children of members under a certain age'.<sup>18</sup>

Similar arrangements were made by every other Caledonian Society in the Province during the 1870s and 1880s. The South Canterbury Caledonian Society was founded in Timaru on 17 April 1875. Between 1876 and 1883 the Society held its annual athletic gatherings at the grounds of the South Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association. Thereafter the Society was permitted to use the facilities of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club (S.C.A.A.C.) which proved to be far more 'fitted for athletic sports'.<sup>19</sup> In September 1885 the South Canterbury Caledonian Society finally obtained a lease for twenty-

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<sup>16</sup> Carlyon, 'Friendly Societies 1842-1938', p.122.

<sup>17</sup> Canterbury Caledonian Society, Minutes, 25 August 1882, Canterbury Caledonian Society Minute Book Number 1, 6 March 1882 – 12 August 1893, Canterbury Caledonian Society Archives, Christchurch.

<sup>18</sup> LT, 27 December 1881; 14 December 1883.

one years on a section of the Government Reserve at Patiti Point, and spent £260 12s having an iron fence seven feet high erected around the area.<sup>20</sup> Initially the Society auctioned the right to collect 'the Takings at the Gate', but retained control of this function from January 1885.<sup>21</sup> Like the Friendly Societies, the various Caledonian Societies devoted any profits accruing from their gatherings to the extensive benevolent activities which they undertook throughout Canterbury.<sup>22</sup>

In whatever form they were eventually established, athletic sports meetings attracted the general population of Canterbury in considerable numbers to enjoy the day's events. The attendance at the 'usual New Year's sports' held at Rangiora in January 1871 was described as 'large; at no portion of the day [were] there less than five hundred persons on the ground.'<sup>23</sup> Improvements in communications throughout the Province quickly brought more visitors. In January 1873 the 'increased facilities for travelling from the larger towns of Christchurch, Lyttelton, and Kaiapoi by the opening of the Great Northern Railway ... induced a far larger number than usual from those places to be present.'<sup>24</sup> The morning train from Christchurch carried 'another large batch of sightseers [who] were deposited on the platform, and they lost no time in visiting the sports paddock.'<sup>25</sup> 'The attendance of the public' in January 1883 was described as 'excellent, there being at one time quite 1,000 people' present.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> TH, 2 January 1884.

<sup>20</sup> TH, 16, 25, 30 September 1885; 2 January 1886.

<sup>21</sup> TH, 16 September 1885.

<sup>22</sup> *Balance Sheet of the Canterbury United District (Including Branch Courts), A.O.F., From March 2nd to December 31st, 1877*, Ancient Order of Foresters, Christchurch, 1878, MS 95/9, d/1, Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, p.9; [n.a.] *Centennial of the Canterbury Caledonian Society, 1882 - 1982*, Canterbury Caledonian Society, Christchurch, 1982, p.11; TH, 16, 30 September; 28 November 1885.

<sup>23</sup> LT, 4 January 1871.

<sup>24</sup> WP, 4 January 1873.

<sup>25</sup> LT, 2 January 1873.

<sup>26</sup> LT, 2 January 1883.

On their inauguration as a permanent institution in December 1868 the Christchurch 'Popular Sports' attracted 3,000 visitors to Latimer Square, including a number who had travelled by rail from Lyttelton. The crowds increased in size as both the population of the Province and its network of railways expanded rapidly. At the peak of their popularity in December 1876 the sports attracted 'nearly 12,000 persons'.<sup>27</sup> The attendance on this occasion was almost certainly boosted by the presentation on the ground 'of a testimonial to the last Superintendent of the now defunct Province of Canterbury,'<sup>28</sup> William Rolleston. However, between 1875 and 1880 the sports typically drew eight to ten thousand spectators from throughout the Province. So many people visited the sports that, despite shifting the event to the far more capacious Hagley Park in 1878, the organisers experienced very serious difficulties with the control of crowds and the management of wheeled traffic.<sup>29</sup> The committee was forced to postpone the final six events of the inaugural meeting at the new venue because 'a section of larrikins and grown men, who should have known better, [acted] in such a manner as to destroy the whole character of the sports' by invading the track and refusing to move.<sup>30</sup> The sports retained their popularity throughout most of the 1880s, with 'upwards of 7000 persons' attending in December 1882.<sup>31</sup>

A means of maintaining a social (and physical) distance between classes existed at every meeting from 1869 in the form of a grandstand, to which 1s was charged for admission. By 1872 this initially modest 'platform' had evolved into an imposing structure capable of accommodating five hundred people in 'comfortable seats, [with] an awning to afford

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<sup>27</sup> LT, 18 December 1876.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> LT, *Supplement*, 4 January 1869; 17 December 1872; 17 December 1875; *Supplement*, 18 December 1877; 17 December 1878; *Supplement* 21 December 1878; WP, 18 December 1875; 10 February 1877; 21 December 1878.

<sup>30</sup> LT, *Supplement* 21 December 1878; WP, 21 December 1878.

<sup>31</sup> LT, 18 December 1882.

protection from the sun',<sup>32</sup> changing rooms for the competitors and an office for the Clerk of the Course. Into this enclosure tended to gravitate 'his Worship the Mayor, several members of the City Council',<sup>33</sup> large numbers of 'ladies' and, occasionally, the Governor of the colony with his retinue. Evidence suggests that the charge for admission to the grandstand was imposed at least partially with the intention of creating a barrier between the classes. H. E. Alport urged the appointment of a steward, one of whose duties would be to prevent 'the intrusion of those who gained a position on that structure by climbing up the posts.'<sup>34</sup> Thus, while the sum demanded for the privilege was minimal, only those who were able or willing to pay could gain access to the sole vantage point on the ground from which an unobstructed view of proceedings could be obtained. However, the number of visitors seeking entry was usually far in excess of what could be accommodated, a circumstance which suggests the existence of a clientele drawn from outside the local élites. Hence, the extent to which the grandstand actually constituted a barrier between the classes should not be exaggerated.

The sports of the Friendly Societies also drew large crowds from their inauguration. The Odd Fellows' gathering on Boxing Day in 1873 attracted 'from two to three thousand' visitors.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the evident popularity of this one event aroused fears for the continued existence of established rural sports meetings throughout the Province. 'The friendly societies', wrote one commentator,

are so strong and have so much influence with the general public, that they necessarily possess a great advantage over the projectors of any other sports, and they should accordingly be so far merciful as to avoid making their fetes counter-

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<sup>32</sup> LT, 17 December 1872.

<sup>33</sup> LT *Supplement*, 4 January 1869.

<sup>34</sup> LT *Supplement*, 21 December 1878.

<sup>35</sup> WP, 27 December 1873.



attractions to anything of a similar kind in the locality where they are held.<sup>36</sup>

Though such concerns proved misplaced, attendances at the fetes organised by the Friendly Societies in Christchurch grew apace. Undeterred by the charge levied for admission, 'probably four thousand persons were present' at the sports of the Ancient Order of Foresters in December 1877 and over three thousand the following year.<sup>37</sup> The inauguration in December 1879 of the 'Amalgamated Benefit Friendly Societies' Fete', in which the Ancient Order of Foresters, the M.U.I.O.O.F. and the Society of Druids combined their efforts, promoted further growth in attendances. The first meeting attracted at least 4,500 visitors, the number rising to perhaps 10,000 in December 1880.<sup>38</sup> Anxieties to the contrary notwithstanding, this success was achieved without diminishing the capacity of the established Popular Sports to attract large crowds.<sup>39</sup>

The gatherings organised in Christchurch by the Canterbury Caledonian Society during the 1880s also attracted spectators in large numbers. The inaugural sports were held in January 1882, several weeks before the Society was actually established, and drew 'an attendance of some 5000 people'.<sup>40</sup> The crowd at the first gathering conducted under the auspices of the C.C.S. on 16 December 1882 'exceeded 4000', while that held one year later was witnessed by 'an attendance of over 7000 persons'.<sup>41</sup> Although the concourse at the sports of 1884 was estimated to have been somewhere 'between three and four thousand',<sup>42</sup> this constituted a substantial reduction on the attendance of the previous year and marked the

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<sup>36</sup> LT, 27 December 1873.

<sup>37</sup> LT, 27 December 1877; 27 December 1878.

<sup>38</sup> LT, 26 December 1879; 28 December 1880.

<sup>39</sup> LT, 2 January 1880; 17 December 1880; WP, 27 December 1879; 17 December 1881; 18 December 1882.

<sup>40</sup> LT, 3 January 1882.

<sup>41</sup> LT, 18 December 1882; 18 December 1883.

<sup>42</sup> LT, 17 December 1884.

onset of a progressive decline which eventually caused the Society to cease organising the gathering after 1889.<sup>43</sup>

Notwithstanding the failure of the initiative undertaken by the C.C.S., the various athletic fetes held in Christchurch between the early 1870s and the mid-1880s proved very popular. Most events drew between three thousand and four thousand spectators during the early years of this period, but the numbers attending each gathering had increased to between ten thousand and twelve thousand by 1881. The total population of Christchurch and the adjacent Districts had grown over the same period from about twenty thousand to almost thirty-five thousand persons.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the major sporting festivals of the metropolis attracted audiences equivalent to between fifteen and thirty-five percent of the local populace.

However, a decline in attendances at both the Popular and Friendly Societies' sports in Christchurch which commenced during the mid-1880s eventually became so severe that these events were terminated in 1890. Crowds diminished in size to such an extent that the 'great sporting festivals of the Plains' were no longer economic to organise. The bodies responsible for organising the sports depended almost entirely upon revenue derived from either subscriptions from the general public or a charge for admission imposed 'at the gate' to pay for prizes and to meet general expenses associated with the meeting. Such sources of funding probably dwindled as the Long Depression continued. Statistics suggest that the material circumstances of most wage earners in Canterbury deteriorated markedly during the second half of the 1880s, as wage rates fell and the prices of some staple foods and other

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<sup>43</sup> *Centennial of the Canterbury Caledonian Society, 1882 - 1982*, p.11.

<sup>44</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1874, p.20; 1878, pp.8, 40; 1881, pp.9, 45.

commodities rose significantly.<sup>45</sup> Thus, even assuming that the great majority of the labour force could obtain regular employment, the amount of disposable income in the pockets of workers in the Province almost certainly decreased after 1885.<sup>46</sup> The lack of available funds eventually became so acute that the various organising bodies could no longer fulfil their responsibilities, and the great sports meetings of Christchurch languished in consequence.

Rural sports contests staged in the towns of mid-Canterbury drew substantial crowds, even beyond 1890. The inaugural meeting held at Southbridge in January 1872, in a paddock belonging to C. J. Bridge, was attended by 'upwards of 500 persons'.<sup>47</sup> The turnout increased to more than six hundred in 1873 and 1874, and 'Fully seven hundred persons' in 1876.<sup>48</sup> 'Not less than 2,000' people visited the Ellesmere sports of 1877, which 'might have been expected, seeing that the sports were those of the Southbridge, Leeston, Killinchy and Dunsandel districts amalgamated.'<sup>49</sup>

Athletic 'fetes' arranged by 'Lodges' or 'Courts' of the variously Friendly Societies which had been established in the outlying towns of the Province also drew spectators in considerable numbers. 'Upwards of five-hundred people' generally attended the 'annual Boxing-day sports, [conducted] under the patronage of the Alexandrovna Lodge of Oddfellows' in Temuka.<sup>50</sup> The sports organised every December in Timaru by the Ancient

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<sup>45</sup> *Statistics of New Zealand*, 'Average Rates of Wages in each Provincial District During the Year', 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890; 'Average Prices of Live Stock, Provisions, &c., in each Provincial District of New Zealand during the Year', 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1890.

<sup>46</sup> W. J. Gardner, 'A Colonial Economy,' in G. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992, pp.73, 75; C. G. F. Simkin, *The Instability of a Dependent Economy: Economic Fluctuations in New Zealand, 1840-1914*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1951, pp.165-6; D. Thorns and C. Sedgwick, *Understanding Aotearoa/New Zealand: Historical Statistics*, The Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1997, p.64; M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society, 1850-1900*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1989, pp.106-7.

<sup>47</sup> WP, 6 January 1872.

<sup>48</sup> WP, 11 January 1873; 8 January 1876; LT, 5 January 1874.

<sup>49</sup> WP, 6 January 1877; LT, 3 January 1877.

<sup>50</sup> TH, 28 December 1876; 1 January 1880; 28 December 1883.

Order of Foresters, or alternately by the ‘amalgamated Friendly Societies’ of the town, were patronised by between five-hundred and two thousand persons.<sup>51</sup> Thus, each of these events attracted roughly twenty per cent of the population of the entire Riding in which the town was situated.<sup>52</sup>

The annual gatherings organised by the various Caledonian Societies in the region proved immensely popular. Approximately five thousand people, (85% of the Riding of Levels in 1881) visited the New Year’s Day Sports in Timaru organised by the South Canterbury Caledonian Society.<sup>53</sup> The athletic gathering organised each Boxing Day by the Caledonian Society in Waimate usually attracted ‘a very large concourse of spectators’. The actual numbers fluctuated between five hundred and 2,500, between fifteen and seventy per cent of those resident in Waimate County during the early 1880s.<sup>54</sup>

Rural sports ‘fetes’ were also organised by a miscellany of Temperance organisations and committees of local citizens at small towns throughout South Canterbury during the 1870s and 1880s. These events proved uniformly popular. More than one thousand people visited the ‘great annual fete, held under the auspices of the Good Templars of South Canterbury’ at Waimate in April 1878. The throng included ‘between 700 and 800’ who were ‘literally crammed’ into the carriages of a train which travelled to the venue from Winchester, via Temuka and Timaru.<sup>55</sup> Approximately 1500 spectators attended the ‘Catholic Temperance Demonstration and Sports’, which were also held in Waimate, on Boxing Day in

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<sup>51</sup> TH, 27 December 1881; 27 December 1883; 27 December 1884; 28 December 1885.

<sup>52</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1881, p.47.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, TH, 2 January 1878; 2 January 1879; 2 January 1880; 2 January 1884; 2, 4 January 1886.

<sup>54</sup> TH, 29 December 1876; 29 December 1881; 28 December 1885.

<sup>55</sup> TH, 23 April 1878.

1878.<sup>56</sup> The sports held annually during this period at Fairlie Creek regularly attracted between two hundred and four hundred people.<sup>57</sup>

A significant proportion of those who attended the various sports meetings were carried on the system of railways which expanded steadily in Canterbury from the mid-1860s. The public and some critical observers were more acute than those directly responsible for the management of the railways in recognising the need for a system which was sufficiently flexible in its organisational structure to meet the demands of a growing 'leisure trade'. The *Lyttelton Times* report on the sports at Rangiora in 1873 commented that

the railway arrangements were decidedly unsatisfactory to the public, and complaints were made from all quarters that extra trains had not been put on for Rangiora during the day. Had there been a train laid on to leave Christchurch at say 11 a.m., several hundreds of persons would have visited the North instead of being compelled to remain at home; and the railway fund would have benefited by it. Even the ordinary mid-day train was not allotted sufficient carriages to convey all the persons who wished to travel.<sup>58</sup>

Those administering the railways apparently declined to act on this advice. A visitor at the popular Ohoka and Eyreton sports and horse races in December 1876 claimed that many more people from Kaiapoi would also have come, had a special train been arranged to depart at noon and return at 6.30 p.m. 'The press of business on this political line', he wrote, 'is certainly not so great that alteration from the orthodox hours could not be made on such a festive occasion'.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> TH, 1 January 1879.

<sup>57</sup> TH, 5 January 1884; 30 December 1885.

<sup>58</sup> LT, 2 January 1873.

<sup>59</sup> LT, 28 December 1876.

The light 'press of business' may, indeed, have made the allocation of extra trains feasible on the Kaiapoi-Eyreton or other branch lines. However, while providing special trains to carry thousands of people to a great event like the Kaiapoi or Lyttleton regattas generated large profits for the railways in Canterbury, arranging similar services to transport one or two hundred spectators to rural sports events in small towns in outlying areas is likely to have been uneconomic. Thus, the organisers of almost every such event held in rural Canterbury before 1890 did not find it an easy task to convince local traffic managers to furnish whatever special trains they required.<sup>60</sup> Even the committee of prominent citizens which organised the 'Popular Sports' in Christchurch experienced some difficulty until the early 1870s in persuading the responsible authorities to provide extra trains, despite the fact that the gathering was already attracting thousands of visitors from throughout Canterbury, and that the city lay at the hub of the rail system in the Province.

In contrast, the committees which organised regattas very seldom encountered difficulties of this nature. Only three regattas were held each year, two of them on specific holidays and all in locations adjacent to railway junctions on the main trunk line. The logistical problems associated with arranging additional trains were therefore minimal. Moreover, the regatta committees contained members who were involved in regional Government at the highest levels. Consequently regattas were far better served in the matter of rail transport than most rural sports gatherings.

Whatever the means of conveyance used by visitors to travel to a sports meeting, they were attending a gathering at which entertainments abounded and everything possible had been done to ensure that a good time was had by all. A reporter for the *Lyttelton Times*

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<sup>60</sup> LT, 15 December 1877.

articulated what became the guiding principle underlying rural sports meetings throughout Canterbury when he observed that there was 'Nothing like catering for every taste in affairs of this kind!'<sup>61</sup> The range of attractions on show at popular sports fetes was similar in most respects to that offered at regattas. Confectioners erected booths where, 'in addition to the softer fluids, seductive solids were disposed of.'<sup>62</sup> Most of them did a 'thriving trade.'<sup>63</sup> Equally successful were the almost omnipresent publicans who purveyed both more substantial comestibles and alcoholic beverages. Indeed, so profitable were these enterprises that many committees raised substantial sums by selling the privilege of conducting them at auction or by tender.<sup>64</sup>

The presence of musicians was generally considered central to the success of a rural sports meeting. At most gatherings held in Christchurch or one of the more substantial towns a brass band was employed to serenade spectators between events. However, other forms of musical entertainment were available. 'A brace of "Darky" Minstrels, who might have raised a banjo, and a strolling organ grinder, provided a certain supply of music' to those attending the sports at Kaiapoi in 1876.<sup>65</sup> Crowds at the same site in 1877 received the mixed blessing of being diverted by 'a band of strolling musicians, and the unicycle circus with a hideous barrel organ.'<sup>66</sup> Visitors to the sports in smaller settlements often wished to dance, an activity for which musical accompaniment in some form was essential. The bagpipes were allegedly ideal for the purpose, being 'a sure dancing provoker',<sup>67</sup> but a violin would do as well. Music

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<sup>61</sup> LT, 13 December 1864.

<sup>62</sup> LT, 18 December 1872.

<sup>63</sup> LT, 3 January 1878.

<sup>64</sup> LT, 9 December 1868; 28 November, 29 December 1877.

<sup>65</sup> LT, 14 January 1876.

<sup>66</sup> WP, 13 January 1877.

<sup>67</sup> LT, 17 February 1866; 18 December 1872.

which encouraged dancing 'enlivened and diversified the proceedings' for those attending any rural sports meeting.<sup>68</sup>

The opportunity to gamble also attracted people in considerable numbers. Many of the 'labouring class' attended the sports at Kowai Pass in 1873 and were 'very free with their money, indulging extensively in speculation and losing bets with an equanimity very suggestive of the prosperity which this district with others is enjoying.'<sup>69</sup> Conspicuous at the Lyttelton Shore Sports in 1880 were 'the *inevitable* sporting gentry, who haunt these scenes on such occasions with their gaming boards and mystic tables, around which crowds of interested spectators were congregated' (italics added).<sup>70</sup> However, some committees proved unwilling to accept the 'inevitable'. Gaming tables were erected behind the stalls at the Popular Sports in 1874, 'but when the committee became aware of it, they called in the aid of the police, and wisely had them removed from the ground.' One commentator heartily endorsed their action. 'These alluring mediums of speculation,' he wrote, 'are becoming too numerous at public amusements in this province, and the authorities would do well to adopt repressive measures.'<sup>71</sup> Other organising bodies occasionally followed this advice. In 1876 the committee of the Kaiapoi sports allowed numerous stalls to be erected, 'but the "under and over [seven] tables" were summarily dismissed.'<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, the adoption of 'repressive measures' was rare and gambling flourished at rural sports.

The inclusion of equestrian races in a programme enhanced the opportunities for gambling and subsequently increased the power of that event to draw visitors from great distances. Of the six sports gatherings held in Canterbury during the summer of 1870-71,

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<sup>68</sup> LT, 3 January 1867; 5 January 1871.

<sup>69</sup> LT, 31 December 1873.

<sup>70</sup> WP, 10 January 1880.



those at Rangiora and Woodend incorporated horse racing into the proceedings. Eight years later the number of meetings had increased to twenty-three, and the total of those featuring horse races to eight. Thus, in any particular year approximately one third of the programmes for rural sports in the Province contained an equestrian element. Many of these meetings featured impromptu races for 'hack' horses or ponies which were conducted under obscure rules of local origin. On the other hand, the hack races included in the sports at Kaiapoi and at Ohoka and Eyreton were governed by the rules of the Canterbury Jockey Club. At some meetings the popularity of equine contests gradually surpassed that of events for bipeds. Hence, in 1878 the 'Publicans' Purse and Ohoka and Eyreton Cup' became the central events at the Ohoka and Eyreton sports.<sup>73</sup> However, in most instances hack racing remained simply one segment of a programme which was calculated to be as attractive as possible to the greatest number of people.<sup>74</sup>

A range of other amusements attracted visitors to the sports in large numbers, without arousing concern over their allegedly dubious moral value. Indeed, one person attending the Popular Sports in 1871 noted in them a particular merit. 'A row of booths occupying the whole of the ... western side of the square', observed the *Lyttelton Times*, 'gave a forcible reminder of the annual fairs in the mother country'.<sup>75</sup> These miscellaneous diversions probably included the venerable Aunt Sally, the merry-go-round and stalls at which toys and other useful items were sold. 'Richardson's Show,' a troupe of 'strolling players' who performed scenes from well-known dramatic and comedic theatrical works, appeared at the Popular and Friendly Societies' sports in Christchurch and occasionally in smaller centres

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<sup>71</sup> LT, 21 December 1874.

<sup>72</sup> LT, 14 January 1876.

<sup>73</sup> WP, 2 November 1878.

<sup>74</sup> LT, 21 December 1865; 2 January, 6, 27 December 1873; 2 January 1874; 30 October, 21 December 1878; WP, 27 December 1873; 2 January 1875; 1 January, 30 December 1876; 4 January 1879; 3 January 1880.

<sup>75</sup> LT, 18 December 1871.

during the early and mid-1870s.<sup>76</sup> Thus, the rural sports meeting possessed all the attributes and amusements necessary to attract spectators in large numbers.

Competitors were attracted by programmes typically consisting of about twenty events, in most of which prizes were awarded in cash. Reflecting the greater economic strength of Christchurch, the prizes offered at the Popular Sports and at the athletic fetes of the Friendly and Caledonian Societies were slightly more generous than those given at gatherings in smaller centres. Though the aggregate amount of prize money available at some meetings increased slightly over time, the value of individual awards did not generally display the same tendency.

The programme for the Christchurch sports in 1872 listed twenty-two events, with prizes amounting to £48 4s 6d in cash and a 'silver cup' worth £20 which had been donated by the prosperous merchant E. G. Griffiths. Excluding this valuable trophy, the individual prizes ranged in value from 5s to £3. The number of events remained unchanged in 1878, and prizes in cash with a combined worth of £63 7s 6d were offered along with two cups of uncertain value. Single awards again varied between 5s and £3, though a special prize of £5 was 'given by the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade' to the winning team in the tug of war.<sup>77</sup>

The amounts given in prizes by the Friendly Societies at their various meetings were not initially as generous as those offered at the Popular Sports, but increased steadily over time. Eighteen events were staged at the inaugural 'Grand Fete' of the M.U.I.O.O.F. in 1873, the prizes consisting of £25 8s 6d in cash or costly items and a 'Gold Mounted Walking

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<sup>76</sup> LT, 7 January, 18 December 1871; 2 January 1873; 30 December 1874; 29 November 1875; *Supplement*, 17 December 1878.

<sup>77</sup> LT, 9 December 1878.

Stick' of unknown value. Successful competitors each received between 2s 6d and £2.<sup>78</sup> The Ancient Order of Foresters arranged seventeen contests for their fete in December 1876. Prize money amounted to £36 2s, though in five cases one or all awards were made in the form of commodities. Individual awards ranged from 5s to £3, with the winner of the 'One Mile Handicap Race, open to all comers' receiving £5.<sup>79</sup> The first of the meetings organised by the amalgamated Friendly Societies in 1879 consisted of twenty-two events, the prizes amounting to more than £165 in cash and trophies. Several of the rewards were lavish. The first three placegetters in the 'Grand Open Handicap, distances 220, 440, and 880 yards,' divided prize money of £17 10s between them. Their counterparts in the 'Handicap Walking Race', over three miles, shared £17 in cash. The trophies offered in the 'Half-mile Handicap Race' for 'past and present officers of the Oddfellows' and the 'One Mile Handicap Race' for all comers were valued at £15 15s and £25 respectively. Single awards varied from 10s to £2 2s, and in only three events was a prize of less value given.<sup>80</sup>

The prizes offered at the gatherings organised by the Canterbury Caledonian Society were the most generous available at any popular sports festival in the Province before 1890. The meeting held on Anniversary Day in 1882 consisted of thirty-two events, and the Society contributed £205 in prize money and four cups with a combined value of £20 to be competed for in the two races scheduled for cyclists. Three other trophies with a combined worth of £10 5s were also offered by private donors in a variety of events, including the '100 Yards Handicap Race', the competition for the 'Best Dressed Highlander' and the 'Sailor's Hornpipe'. However, the overwhelming majority of prizes were given in cash. The majority of awards varied in value between £2 and £5, though a few runners-up received £1 and the

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<sup>78</sup> LT, 20 December 1873.

<sup>79</sup> LT, 23 December 1876.

<sup>80</sup> LT, 27 November 1879.

winning team in the 'Tug-of-War' earned £10. Athletes from throughout the Colony attended the 'Gathering' in Christchurch. 'The good value of the prizes offered,' commented the *Lyttelton Times*, 'drew a large number of entries, the well-known pedestrians O'Connor, of Timaru, Woods, of Wellington, the half-caste wrestler, Robinson, together with Hudson and Ogg, who hail from Dunedin.'<sup>81</sup> The gathering staged on Anniversary Day in 1886 included twenty-five events and the sum provided in prize money by the C.C.S. amounted to £216 5s. Private individuals also donated 'special prizes', such as cups and medals, to the value of £19 11s. The apportionment of prize monies remained largely as it had been four years earlier.<sup>82</sup>

The scale of remuneration was far more modest at the meetings organised in outlying settlements. The sports held at Leithfield in December 1872 consisted of seventeen events, with a total of £25 given in prize money. Individual prizes ranged in value from 2s 6d to £1, the single largest being £1 10s. The *Lyttelton Times* reported in 1878 that 'the sports still held a prominent position in the estimation of residents in the Kowai district, upwards of £20 having been subscribed' towards the prize fund.<sup>83</sup> A further report on the Leithfield sports commented that 'the money collected for the purpose was very judiciously allotted, the prizes being so distributed as to afford amusement to all'.<sup>84</sup> The same sentiment appears to have guided the South Canterbury Caledonian Society in making decisions over the allocation of prize money at their Annual Sports in Timaru. Twenty-one events were included in the programme of the sports which were held on New Year's Day in 1884. All prizes were awarded in cash, the entire amount of £191 17s having been contributed by the South Canterbury Caledonian Society. The Society ensured a wide distribution of prize monies by adhering at all its meetings to the practice, which was unusual at the time, of giving third

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<sup>81</sup> Canterbury Caledonian Society Minute Book, 31 March 1883; LT, 18 December 1882.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, 23 February 1887; LT, 17 December 1886.

<sup>83</sup> LT, 29 November 1878.

prizes in most events.<sup>85</sup> Notwithstanding the disparity in resources available to the meetings held in the metropolis and those held in smaller centres, prize lists in general were sufficiently generous to ensure that no meeting lacked competitors.<sup>86</sup>

Another clear distinction emerged between the programmes prepared for the Popular Sports in Christchurch and those arranged for the fetes of the Friendly Societies and rural sports meetings in outlying areas. The former, though containing a few folk games, consisted primarily of standard athletic contests open exclusively to men and youths. Among the sixteen events run at the Popular Sports of December 1870 were three-legged races for men and boys, a sack race for men, an 'egg race' and a wheelbarrow race in which all contestants ran blindfolded.<sup>87</sup> Support for these agrarian amusements was not universal. One writer denounced the egg race as 'always an insufferably stupid and tedious competition to the spectators' and demanded that it be replaced by a '100 yards race for men'.<sup>88</sup> Folk games survived such attacks, and their temporary removal from the programme in 1876, to become customary events at the sports until at least the mid-1880s.<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of contests at the Popular Sports were of the standard track and field variety.

The Friendly Societies developed highly variegated programmes for their fetes in which folk games were prominent, the Ancient Order of Foresters being particularly notable in this respect. By December 1876 the meetings run by the Foresters were 'second only to the Anniversary [Popular] sports [as] a means for encouraging pedestrian contests', but they had 'the advantage of comprising a much greater variety of amusements than anything of the kind

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<sup>84</sup> LT, 28 December 1878.

<sup>85</sup> South Canterbury Caledonian Society, Account Book, 26 August 1875 - 14 January 1891, MS 17.11, South Canterbury Museum, Timaru, 2 January 1884 [p.86]; TH, 2 January 1884; 2 January 1886.

<sup>86</sup> LT, 14 December 1872; 9 December 1878.

<sup>87</sup> LT, 12 December 1870.

<sup>88</sup> LT, 28 November 1872.

in this part of the colony.' Indeed, the diverse range of activities included in a Foresters' fete is reminiscent of the parish wakes of England. In addition to races for men and boys, 'the Committee always include some for females, and a large number for children in their programme, and what is of equal importance to a large section of the public, good provision is also made for dancing.'<sup>90</sup> The vast majority of events at any meeting were open to all comers.<sup>91</sup> The programmes at most of the rural sports gatherings held in outlying towns throughout the Province were very similar to those of the Friendly Societies with the addition, in some instances, of races for Maori.

Though the programmes of the gatherings organised by the Caledonian Societies throughout Canterbury were distinguished by an extremely high degree of uniformity, they nevertheless contained a wide variety of activities. Approximately one-third of any meeting was devoted to 'Pedestrian Events' which comprised standard track athletics for men and boys and, occasionally, one or more 'Bicycle Races'. Field athletics and 'Miscellaneous' contests -- a classification which included wrestling in various styles, the Irish Jig, 'Tossing the Caber', 'Single Sticks' and the 'Tug-of-War' -- constituted a further one-half of the programme. The balance of the 'Gathering' consisted of the 'Highlanders' Competition', incorporating such items as 'Bagpipe Music', 'Best Dressed Highlander' and most proficient performance in a range of Scottish dances.<sup>92</sup> In that contests for women and girls were conspicuously absent from the proceedings, the gatherings of the Caledonian Societies resembled the meetings of the 'closed' athletic clubs rather than the vast majority of popular sports events.

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<sup>89</sup> LT, 29 November 1876.

<sup>90</sup> LT, 27 December 1876.

<sup>91</sup> LT, 20 December 1873; 18 December 1877; TH, 16, 28 December 1876; 27 December 1884; 28 February 1885.

Historians have rightly expressed doubts about the extent to which the female population of New Zealand were able to participate in sporting activities during the nineteenth century. Caroline Daley observes that in Taradale during the nineteenth century women ‘worked at home, as mothers and daughters, paid and unpaid helpers’, under such a heavy burden that they ‘could rarely afford the time to sit down’ and relax. The ‘prime way [married] women managed to grab moments of leisure was to visit their friends and relations during the daytime, when children were at school and husbands were away at work.’ When women gathered on such occasions they discussed ‘the community and the people in it’. In doing so they ‘wielded power’, for gossip was according to Daley, the informal power that women have ‘over the neighbourhood.’ Gossip also ‘allowed women to share ideas and information’, thereby helping to ‘break down the isolation many women felt working most of the day by themselves.’<sup>93</sup>

‘The nature of girls’ play and its values’, writes Daley, ‘largely reflected what they saw their mothers’ lives to be -- kin-oriented, domestic and domesticated, concerned with female forms of production such as sewing’. Leisure activities for girls ‘encouraged and reinforced feminine values of being domestic and decorative’. Their tightly circumscribed sphere of activity embraced playing with dolls, visiting neighbours or relatives and playing ‘house’, learning to play the piano or engaging in such ‘solitary activities’ as reading. Participation in athletic sports was restricted to males, and attempts by women or girls to become involved constituted a violation of ‘the gendered boundaries’.<sup>94</sup> Some women apparently wished to engage in sporting activities considered during this period to be the exclusive preserve of male participants, simply because doing so would give them pleasure.

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<sup>92</sup> TH, 3 January 1882; LT, 18 December 1882.

<sup>93</sup> C. Daley, *Girls & Women, Men & Boys: Gender in Taradale, 1886-1930*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1999, p.114.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, pp.115, 127, 133-4.

Florence Derry lamented the lack of leisure facilities available near her residence in rural Southland, and wrote to her cousin that

I often wish I was a boy, I should so thoroughly enjoy a good game of football. It will be fashionable for girls to play in a few years time I suppose but by that time I shall be too old and fat to play ... and [in such circumstances] one would be too short of breath to waste it in scrummages.<sup>95</sup>

It is difficult to believe that Flo Derry was the only woman in the Colony who was willing to cross 'gendered boundaries' in the realm of sport if given the opportunity.

However, in Canterbury at least, the gendered boundaries did not altogether forbid participation in competitive sports. Indeed, rural sports events provided female inhabitants who possessed athletic talents, and were not constrained by considerations of propriety financial inducements to become competitors. This was particularly so with regard to married women. Colonial households were often fragile economic units in which the continued 'health, energy and ability [of the wife] to keep track of the small amounts of cash earned often made the difference between success and failure, comfort and squalor.'<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, writes Jeanine Graham, 'Most children who survived the risks of early childhood were expected to work.'<sup>97</sup> Thus, a prize won at a rural sports meeting would enable the female members of a family, whether women or girls, to make a significant additional contribution to the domestic enterprise.

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<sup>95</sup> Letter, 'Flo Derry to her cousin Harry, Mendip, Waiau, 8 February 1885', in Frances Porter, Charlotte Macdonald with Tui MacDonald, eds, *'My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates': The unsettled lives of women in nineteenth century New Zealand as revealed to sisters, family and friends*, Auckland University Press & Bridget Williams Books, Auckland, 1996, p.204.

<sup>96</sup> J. Bassett, 'Dark Satanic Mills: 1880-1890', in *The People and The Land: Te Tangata me Te Whenua: An Illustrated History of New Zealand, 1820-1920*, Allen and Unwin, Wellington, 1990, p.185.

<sup>97</sup> J. Graham, 'Settler Society', in G. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand, Second Edition*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992, p.126.



Races for female competitors were featured in some of the earliest meetings. The 'Rural Sports' held at Kaiapoi in December 1864 included 'races for married and single women ... and some for ... girls'.<sup>98</sup> The inclusion of such contests in a programme eventually became common, though not universal. Of seven meetings held in 1868-69, three incorporated events for female contestants. However, the number of races in each instance was only two of a total of approximately twelve. The inclusion of races for women and girls was at first restricted primarily to meetings staged in north Canterbury. Particularly consistent in this respect were the sports held at Saltwater Creek, Leithfield, Kaiapoi, Woodend and Rangiora between 1868 and 1873. Not until the end of 1873 did events for females become reasonably commonplace throughout the Province.<sup>99</sup>

Races for girls under fifteen years of age were more common than those for women. Sports were held at both Woodend and Ohoka on Boxing Day in 1873. Of the four events for females at the former, three were for girls '15 years and under'. Twenty-one athletic contests were listed on the programme of the Ohoka sports. Five of the six races for females were for girls under fourteen years of age.<sup>100</sup> As evidence drawn from two meetings held on New Year's Day in 1878 indicates, the situation changed little over time. At the 'Shore Sports', held annually at Lyttelton in association with the Regatta, nine of the thirty events scheduled were for females. Five of these races were restricted to girls under sixteen years of age. The sports at Halswell on this occasion were unusual with respect to the involvement of women and girls. An evidently surprised reporter noted that 'the attendance [was] numerous, nearly four fifths being members of the fair sex'. Twenty-six events were staged with three of the

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<sup>98</sup> LT, 29 December 1864.

<sup>99</sup> LT, 30 December 1868; 5, 20 January, 18 December 1869; 6, 8 January 1870; 7 January 1871; 1, 2 January, 4 October, 27, 29 December 1873; 3 January 1874; WP, 27 December 1873, 3 January 1874.

<sup>100</sup> LT, 27 December 1873.

foot-races being for girls under seventeen, two for married women and one for single women.<sup>101</sup>

Despite the involvement of females in a number of rural sports meetings, the men who invariably constituted the committees of management viewed their participation with an air of condescension which sometimes became overt. The organisation of the 'ladies' race' at the Rangiora sports in 1872 was regarded as a subject for 'amusing discussion'.<sup>102</sup>

Nevertheless, races for women occasionally aroused intense passions among both spectators and competitors. An extreme example occurred at the sports organised in Christchurch by the Ancient Order of Foresters on Boxing Day in 1876. The Married Womens' race over 50 yards was 'anything but free from jostling.'<sup>103</sup> The competitor favoured beforehand to win the race 'found herself in very close quarters soon after starting, and fought hard to get free, but ... was ignominiously overturned, her fall proving fatal to two or three others, who rolled over in a most inglorious fashion.'<sup>104</sup> 'This *contretemps*,' noted the *Lyttelton Times* with considerable understatement, 'gave rise to considerable difficulty.' Friends of 'the ladies who had come to grief in such an unpleasant fashion wanted the race run over again, and rushed up to the committee's tent ... which had every appearance of ... being carried by storm.' One shocked observer believed that 'such a disgraceful exhibition of rowdyism has rarely, if indeed ever, been seen on a Canterbury ground'. The tent occupied by the Committee

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<sup>101</sup> LT, 2 January 1878.

<sup>102</sup> LT, 16 December 1872.

<sup>103</sup> LT, 27 December 1876; WP, 30 December 1876.

<sup>104</sup> *ibid*.

was fairly besieged by a hustling noisy crowd of ill-mannered brutes, who would have been properly treated if they had been marched off to the lock-up. Several children were knocked down and narrowly escaped injury in the disturbance, which lasted for nearly ten minutes.<sup>105</sup>

Only with difficulty were 'the troubled spirits ... pacified', and 'a moderately clear course obtained' for the next race.

The Married Women's race over 100 yards at the sports held at Amberley on Boxing Day in 1877 was also marked by a fervour which produced immoderate behaviour amongst the entrants in pursuit of victory. 'The competitors ... did not adopt fair means,' noted an observer, 'as one lady, who was winning, was held back by the one who took second honours.'<sup>106</sup> Controversy also erupted among participants in the 'women's and girls' races' at the Lyttelton Shore Sports staged on New Year's Day in 1878. 'A gentleman versed in starting these races had been specially retained,' explained the *Weekly Press*,

but even he did not please the contestants. In the first place some would have it that, in a few instances, he favoured some of the ladies in the starts, while all the losing "girls under fourteen" were unanimous that they had not been fairly treated.<sup>107</sup>

Thus the flippant attitude with which the committees of management at some rural sports meetings treated events for female competitors was not shared by the participants themselves or by considerable numbers of spectators.

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<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> LT, 27 December 1877.

<sup>107</sup> WP, 5 January 1878.

Prizes in the majority of races for women and girls, like those awarded in events for male contestants, were given primarily in cash. However, until about 1880 the amounts conferred on victorious females were often substantially less than those given to successful males competing over the same distance. Marion Prebble received 2s 6d for winning the '100 Yards Handicap Race ... for girls under 16 years' at the Prebbleton sports in 1873, while J. Guy won a first prize of 5s in the '100 Yards Race' for boys under fourteen years of age.<sup>108</sup> Likewise Alice and Emily Streeter, the winner and runner-up in the 'Quarter-Mile Flat Race for women over fifteen' at the Lincoln Sports in January 1874, received 10s and 5s respectively for their efforts. Their counterparts in the equivalent event for men won prizes of 20s and 10s.<sup>109</sup> The first two finishers in the 'Men's 100 Yards Race' at the Amberley sports in December 1877 received cash prizes fifty per cent greater in value than those awarded for the 'Married Women's Race' run over the same distance.<sup>110</sup> This inequality appears to have been diminishing rapidly by the end of the decade. Reports of the meetings held at Waterton, Rakaia, South Malvern and Whitecliffs, and Kowai Pass in 1879 indicate that virtual or complete parity between the sexes in the matter of prize money was becoming increasingly common.<sup>111</sup>

However, a substantial proportion of the prizes for female competitors was given in the form of commodities, the ratio probably being higher than that for males. The nature of the individual awards varied between the totally practical and the bizarrely inappropriate. The winner of the Ladies' race run over one hundred yards at the Rangiora sports on New Year's Day in 1871 received a 'new dress,' while the runner-up obtained a bonnet.<sup>112</sup> At the Prebbleton sports in 1873, the first and second placegetters in the '100 Yards Race for

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<sup>108</sup> LT, 27 December 1873.

<sup>109</sup> WP, 3 January 1874.

<sup>110</sup> LT, 27 December 1877.

Married Women' respectively won a cradle and a clothes basket. Sarah McMeekin, who won the '100 Yards Race for Girls under 16 years' at the same meeting, received an embroiderer's 'workbox'.<sup>113</sup> Virtually the entire range of wares likely to be given as prizes in events for females at any rural sports meeting in Canterbury were offered at the Lyttelton Shore Sports from 1878. Items won in races for single women included a watch valued at £2, a pair of boots worth 10s, a substantial 'dress piece' of calico, a 'hat', a 'work box' and undefined 'goods, value 10s 6d'. The '56lb box of soap' offered as first prize in the contest for their married counterparts was obviously of great practical value. The 'box of tea' and 'dress piece' of calico regularly given as prizes in the 'Old Ladies Race (over 50 years)' were similarly useful.<sup>114</sup>

The commodities awarded as prizes in events for females generally reflected the needs generated by the material circumstances of their lives, or at least the expectations among males of what those needs would be. However, certain of the articles selected appear to have been of dubious propriety in this context, even in the frontier society of Canterbury. It is possible that the winner of the dozen 'bottles of porter' presented to the second placegetter in the race for married women at the Shore Sports in 1878 might have shared the fruits of her success with her spouse. However, the use which the victor herself might have made of the '5 gallons [of] beer' she won in the 'Girls' Race [over] 100 yards' at the Ohoka sports in 1873 is not easy to discern.<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless, the prospect of winning useful prizes, and an enthusiasm for sports, prompted a number of women and girls who were endowed with athletic prowess to become competitors in rural and Friendly Society sports meetings throughout Canterbury.

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<sup>111</sup> WP, 3 January 1880.

<sup>112</sup> WP, 7 January 1871.

<sup>113</sup> LT, 27 December 1873; 29 December 1875.

Male members of the *élites* and the middling classes were attracted to athletic sports for the same reasons which prompted them to become involved in regattas. A few had been enthusiastic athletes 'at Home' and wished to remain involved when in the colony. Others, particularly publicans, may have been swayed by pecuniary considerations. Publicans were usually involved in some capacity in their local rural sports meeting beyond that of acting as 'mine host' to spectators. Many provided the venue at which the committee met to make the necessary arrangements, the paddock in which the gathering was held and the food and drink for any dinner or ball which followed. Commercial considerations thus provided publicans with a powerful incentive to become involved in their local sports meeting. Some, such as Charles Oram and William Burnip at Kaiapoi, were active and esteemed members of organising bodies.<sup>116</sup>

However, publicans were not universally welcome at sports meetings. The committee of the Popular Sports in Christchurch feared that the sale of intoxicating spirits on site would lead to drunkenness and disorder among spectators. Thus, before 1878 they very rarely allowed a publican's booth on the ground, despite occasionally being pressed to do so.<sup>117</sup> Very few of the committees in outlying areas followed their example, and the publican's booth became a standard fixture at sports gatherings throughout Canterbury.

Many male members of the *élites* and the middling classes may have become involved in rural sports, particularly as administrators, for the opportunity thus offered to enhance their feelings of self-worth and their standing within local communities. The newspapers regularly carried the names of those serving on the various sports committees,

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<sup>114</sup> WP, 5 January 1878; 10 January 1880; LT, 2 January 1878; 16 December 1878.

<sup>115</sup> LT, 16 December 1878; 27 December 1873.

<sup>116</sup> LT, 29 December 1876; 27 December 1873.

and of those to whom votes of thanks were passed by committees for their exceptional energy or self-sacrifice. Expressions of gratitude occasionally took material form. In January 1876 about 'thirty gentlemen resident in the [Doyleston] District' gave 'a very handsome gold signet ring' to Charles Parker, Secretary and Treasurer of the Doyleston Sports Committee. This gift was 'a mark of the esteem in which he was held by the Doyleston public, in regard to the energetic manner in which he had given his assistance for so many years in connection with the Doyleston Sports.'<sup>118</sup> Likewise, Francis Bosustow was presented in January 1879 with 'a handsome breast-pin and ring' by the committee of the sports and horse races at Kaiapoi 'for the use of his paddock' over several years.<sup>119</sup> Such open acknowledgement of the regard in which they were held by their peers and by the population in general must have been deeply gratifying to many of the men drawn from the élites and middling classes who donated time or resources to rural sports. These organisers were responsible for arranging events which provided excellent entertainment and fond memories for those who attended. However, a disjunction probably existed between these effects and the motives which impelled some men to become involved in the administration of sports meetings.

Whatever the wellspring of their motivation, the involvement of the élites and middling classes was essential for they performed a variety of services without which no sports meeting could take place. They provided the necessary organisational skills, and supplied or collected most of the money required for the prizes and to offset general expenses. However, the rationale underpinning the arrangement of the committees which administered the various sports held throughout Canterbury was similar to that which determined the composition of the bodies which organised regattas. Though a majority of

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<sup>117</sup> LT, 24, 25 November, 6, 18 December 1871; 23 November, 4, 7, 9, 17 December 1878.

<sup>118</sup> LT, 14 January 1876.

<sup>119</sup> LT, 9 January 1879.

every committee was drawn from the local élite, practical considerations frequently mandated that a significant proportion of the membership be selected from other classes.

The body which organised the Popular Sports held in Christchurch on Anniversary Day in 1880 consisted of thirty-two members, twenty-six of whom can be identified. Fifteen were members of the urban élites. Five were senior functionaries in the municipal government of Christchurch, while the remainder consisted of three architects, two merchants, an importer, an auctioneer, the owner of a large plastering and painting business, a furniture dealer and Alexander Bickerton, a Professor of Chemistry. Nine other members comprised an amalgam of petty urban proprietors, clerks and 'semiprofessionals'. Only two known members of the committee were drawn from the ranks of the blue-collar workforce. Several individuals were undoubtedly invited to join the committee because their involvement would have a significant bearing on the success of the event. Among the members were the Mayor, the Town Clerk, the Clerk of Works, the City Inspector, the City Surveyor, a journalist and a newspaper reporter.<sup>120</sup> These individuals were useful in the organisation of every aspect of the meeting from the arrangement of the track and field facilities to the printing of posters. The work involved in painting the grandstand and the preparation of signs was also facilitated by the presence on the committee of two painters, one being the proprietor of a small enterprise in Christchurch and the other one of his employees.

The committee responsible for organising the Caledonian Sports in Timaru each New Year's Day also contained a number of persons whose selection was evidently dictated by utilitarian considerations. Of the thirty-four members serving on that body in 1882, twenty-



five can be identified with certainty. Eleven were drawn from local urban and rural élites. With the exception of one broker and one physician, all were proprietors or managers of major commercial or agricultural enterprises. The remaining fourteen were members of the middling classes. Apart from one teacher, all were owners of small or medium-sized businesses or farms. As might be expected in an event of this nature, several of the members appear to have been selected on the basis of their demonstrated expertise in matters of Gaelic culture. This most obviously applied in the case of the eleven who were appointed to serve as ‘Judge[s] for Dancing, Music and Costume’.<sup>121</sup>

The committees charged with organising rural sports meetings in the smaller towns in Canterbury conformed to the pattern of being dominated by the local élites, while containing individuals drawn from other classes. However, there is little evidence that members were chosen expressly because the expertise which they possessed in a particular activity was conducive to the success of the enterprise. Of the eighteen men who formed the committee responsible for arranging the rural sports at the hamlet of Fairlie Creek on New Year’s Day in 1882, fourteen can be identified accurately. Eleven were members of what constituted the local élites. Seven were the proprietors of small commercial enterprises in the town, while the remaining four owned small farms nearby. Three others were employed in the lowest category of blue collar vocation, that of unskilled labourer.<sup>122</sup> These individuals appear to have had no particular qualification for service on the committee, other than a willingness to devote their energies and organisational talents or their cheap and useful manual labour to the

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<sup>120</sup> See Information on Sources in Appendix A. LT, various dates, November – December 1880; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*.

<sup>121</sup> TH, various dates, November 1881 – January 1882; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *Canterbury*, *passim*; Electoral Rolls, 1880-1, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*.

<sup>122</sup> TH, various dates, November 1881- January 1882; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *Canterbury*, *passim*; Electoral Rolls, 1880-1, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*.

creation of an event which would benefit the community. Thus, while the existence of popular sports meetings in their various guises depended largely on the initiative shown by the élites and middling classes, pragmatism often dictated that responsibility for the administration of an event be shared with blue collar workers.

Activities and agencies of a political nature were of minimal importance in the management of sports meetings. The significance of politics was greatest at the Popular Sports in Christchurch. The Superintendent of the Province served as President, a largely honorary post. The mayor of Christchurch played a far more substantial role, usually acting as chairman of the committee of management. The Provincial Council, until its abolition in 1876, and the Christchurch City Council each intermittently donated small sums to the Sports.<sup>123</sup>

The involvement of politics in any form with rural sports was much less evident in outlying areas. However, a few minor exceptions to this generalisation did exist. At the sports held in Kaiapoi on 13 February 1866 two 'special prizes' amounting to £5 were offered in the 800 yards race for men by W. Travers, who was standing in the seat of Kaiapoi for election to the General Assembly three days later. This flagrant electioneering failed to have the desired effect on local voters, and Travers was narrowly defeated by Joseph Beswick.<sup>124</sup> Sitting Members of the Provincial Council and of Parliament did serve as members of committees, but such an occurrence was very rare. Thus, political institutions and personalities had little, if any, impact on the conduct of rural sports festivals.

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<sup>123</sup> LT, 12 December 1870; 26 November 1872; 4 December 1874; 15 December 1875; WP, 4 December 1880.

<sup>124</sup> LT, 15, 17 February 1866.

Despite possessing a host of features which encouraged the maximum participation by 'catering for all tastes', the failure to establish a basis on which the indigenous people of the region could join the proceedings revealed starkly that the capacity of the sports to be inclusive had distinct limits. Maori in Canterbury, like female Pakeha, were a group for whom economic necessity provided ample motivation to participate in rural sports. As mentioned in Chapter one the crippling losses of land shattered the Maori economic base. Of the twenty million acres 'sold' for £2,000 the entire Ngai Tahu tribe were awarded reserves amounting to only 6,359 acres. Equating to a mere five acres per capita of the Maori population then living within the block, this estate was barely sufficient to enable subsistence farming and totally inadequate to provide a basis for economic development. These meagre holdings were principally concentrated near Akaroa on Bank's Peninsula, and in north Canterbury at the Tuahiwi Reserve and the pa at Kaiapoi.<sup>125</sup> 'In the long run,' concludes Parsonson, 'many people were ... left in poverty.'<sup>126</sup> Thus, a number of Ngai Tahu may have been motivated to participate in rural sports meetings by the prospect of winning sufficient prize money to mitigate their dismal circumstances.

Maori participated primarily, though not exclusively, at events organised in the immediate vicinity of their reserves. The programme of the sports held at Kaiapoi in December 1864 included a '500 yards hurdle race (over six hurdles) for Maoris', for which three entered, and also 'a race for Maori women.' The two prizes offered in the men's contest were substantial, at £1 10s and 10s respectively, but were only one half the value of those awarded in the 'Flat Race' over 500 yards in which Pakeha competed.<sup>127</sup> However, events for Maori were not regularly scheduled thereafter. Following the conclusion of an 'arrangement'

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<sup>125</sup> H. C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamou, The Greenstone Island*, pp.290-93, 334, 374-75, 377-79, 382.

<sup>126</sup> A. Parsonson, 'The Challenge to Mana Maori', in G. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand, Second Edition*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992, p.181.

<sup>127</sup> LT, 29 December 1864.

between the competitors in the 'Maori Men's Flat Race, 500 yards' in 1867, the involvement of Maori in the athletic festivals at Kaiapoi declined abruptly.<sup>128</sup> A few individuals performed with distinction in open events at later meetings, but the organisation of contests specifically for Maori ceased.<sup>129</sup>

The sports at Rangiora provided some modest opportunities for Maori, particularly women. The race for married women on New Year's Day 1872 'was contested by both whites and Maoris'. Two Maori women, identified only as 'Lydia' and 'Currididy', won the first and second prizes consisting of 'a new dress valued at 10s' and 2s 6d in cash.<sup>130</sup> For reasons which remain unclear, separate events were staged in 1873 for Maori, married and single women. The first prize in each instance was 'a new dress'. However, the awards for the runners-up in the single and married women's races were 7s 6d while that in the contest for Maori was only 5s.<sup>131</sup> Whatever the reason for this amendment to the programme, from this point onward Maori apparently withdrew from the sports at Rangiora.

The most sustained and intensive involvement by Maori in a rural sports meeting occurred at Woodend between 1870 and 1874. Races for both men and women were regularly included in the programme, and Maori competed very successfully against Pakeha in open events. However, the principal contribution of Ngai Tahu to the Woodend sports was cultural rather than athletic in nature. In January 1870 the committee of management arranged and paid for a bullock to be roasted and consumed at the gathering by local Maori 'in approved Maori style'.<sup>132</sup> Newspapers provided interested readers with minute technical

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<sup>128</sup> LT, 28 December 1867.

<sup>129</sup> LT, 18 December 1869.

<sup>130</sup> LT, 3 January 1872.

<sup>131</sup> LT, 2 January 1873; WP, 4 January 1873.

<sup>132</sup> WP, 8 January 1870.

descriptions of the cooking process, which was reported as resembling 'the Norwegian stove principle to some extent.'<sup>133</sup>

The curious came in large numbers to gaze on Maori preparing and consuming food. 'The centre of attraction in these sports,' noted an observer in 1873, 'has always been the Maori feasts got up in the real native style, and it certainly has had the effect of bringing persons from Christchurch and other distant places to witness it.'<sup>134</sup> The 'natives' occasionally attempted to turn this curiosity to commercial advantage. 'The onlookers' at the sports in 1871 'were all excitement to see the interior of the native oven, but the Maoris were not so impatient as their pakeha friends'. One reporter complained, unconscious of any irony or pathos in the situation, that 'with their usual avarice for money, [the Maori] stood round the oven, hat in hand, and would not exhibit its interior until they had collected a certain amount of money.'<sup>135</sup> Such efforts did little to alleviate the poverty in which the 'Canterbury natives' were trapped.<sup>136</sup>

The spectacle at Woodend also represented an attempt by some Maori to inculcate in the local Pakeha at least a minimal understanding of their culture. 'Mr George Peter Mutu,' reported the *Lyttelton Times* in 1873, 'favoured the onlookers with a description of Maori customs, and the manner in which they, like their European friends, were in the habit of entertaining their guests.'<sup>137</sup> However, the initiative was probably doomed to failure. The sensitivity of his audience to *Maoritanga* may be judged from the remark that the *hangi* pit in which the bullock was roasted 'to the pakeha eye resembles a newly-made grave.'<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> WP, 7 January 1871.

<sup>134</sup> LT, 1 January 1873.

<sup>135</sup> LT, 7 January 1871.

<sup>136</sup> AJHR, 1870, A-3, pp.69-71; 1874, G-2, pp.23-24.

<sup>137</sup> LT, 1 January 1872.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid.*

Moreover, what Ward claims for the North Island was also evident in Canterbury. The settlers were generally oblivious to the part they played in the virtual destruction of Maori society.<sup>139</sup> Thus, the occasional visit to a *hangi* on a rural sports ground, even if accompanied by an educational speech on native culture, was unlikely of itself to erase deeply held cultural prejudices from the minds of colonists.

Indeed, evidence suggests that cultural prejudice and ethnocentric arrogance eventually eliminated the event from the sports at Woodend, and consequently brought about the demise of the sports themselves. From January 1873 the reports appearing in local newspapers of the Maori 'feasts' at the Woodend sports acquired a critical tone hitherto absent. 'However novel the native style of bullock roasting may appear,' wrote one correspondent, 'it is certainly a disgusting sight, and the natives themselves are now beginning to look upon it in the same light, particularly when they are able to cook meat in the European manner.'<sup>140</sup> This view enjoyed sufficient support to ensure that among the events omitted by the committee from the programme of the sports held on Boxing Day in 1873 was 'the orthodox Maori feast'. Employing the same derogatory adjective as the earlier critic, one commentator considered that this development 'was more to be desired than otherwise, as the feast has hitherto been a disgusting spectacle.'<sup>141</sup> It was further remarked in 1876 that while the feast had been important at previous meetings, 'yet on this occasion most persons would be glad to see it omitted, and the afternoon more pleasantly taken up with athletics or local races with local horses competing.'<sup>142</sup> Whatever the accuracy of this assessment, abolition of the *hangi* did nothing to stop a decline in support for the Woodend sports, culminating in their demise in 1876.

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<sup>139</sup> A. Ward, *A Show Of Justice: Racial 'Amalgamation' in Nineteenth Century New Zealand*, Auckland University Press, 1995, p.222.

<sup>140</sup> LT, 1 January 1873.

<sup>141</sup> LT, 27 December 1873.

It is also possible that the evident antagonism felt by the organisers and some others toward the feast may initially have been aroused, or at least exacerbated, by political rather than cultural considerations. The energetic manner in which Ngai Tahu pursued their Claim through the Courts and in Parliament during the 1870s probably generated some ill-feeling between Maori and Pakeha in north Canterbury.<sup>143</sup> Whatever the ultimate explanation for the removal of the feast from the programme, events at Woodend demonstrated that while a rural sports meeting could become a social event involving a wide variety of people, specific Maori cultural practices were discouraged.

This major failure apart, rural sports meetings generally attracted large numbers of people from all segments of the settler population. The opportunity to spend a day gambling, drinking, dancing and watching athletic or equestrian contests in an environment reminiscent of an English parish wake was a welcome diversion. Competitors of all ages and both sexes were drawn either by the chance of alleviating a possibly precarious economic situation by winning a prize, by the opportunity for an entertaining family outing, or by a simple love of sport. Improvements in the communications infrastructure, particularly the system of railways, facilitated the efforts of all groups to travel considerable distances to attend the various meetings as the railway system extended into the countryside.

However, due to circumstances beyond the control of the organisers, the athletic festival in all its forms enjoyed mixed fortunes from 1880. While rural sports remained viable in many outlying areas, the Popular, Caledonian and Friendly Society meetings had effectively disappeared from Christchurch by 1892. The demise of these events was brought

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<sup>142</sup> WP, 8 January 1876.

about by a combination of factors. The so-called 'Long Depression', which struck Canterbury at the end of 1879, ensured that pockets throughout the Province grew deeper and arms shorter when efforts were made during the 1880s to canvass for the subscriptions by which most meetings were financed. In Christchurch an increasing number of counter-attractions, including bicycle racing and excursions by steamboat, competed after 1890 for a reduced amount of discretionary income. It is also possible that the demise of sports meetings, particularly those held in Christchurch, can be attributed in part to the rise of amateur athletics which became increasingly important after 1880. Young athletes may have been reluctant to compete for cash prizes at the rural, Popular or Caledonian sports when they would consequently have been debarred from participating in the increasingly important, and increasingly 'lilywhite', events conducted under the auspices of the Amateur Athletic Clubs. By the time at which their decline commenced, the various athletic sports meetings had been providing a highly popular entertainment for the colonists of Canterbury for almost thirty years. Many found that 'the attraction was simply irresistible' and flocked at least once a year to a nearby trysting ground 'like Britons out for a holiday.' Not all forms of athletic endeavour proved so popular.

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<sup>143</sup> Evison, *Te Wai Pounamou*, pp.433-53.



Illustration VI

# ***STUPID, UNINTERESTING AND INHUMAN***



***PEDESTRIANISM  
IN CANTERBURY  
1860-1885***

*CHAPTER 3*  
*‘STUPID, UNINTERESTING AND INHUMAN’ : 1*  
*PEDESTRIANISM IN CANTERBURY, 1860–1885*

Although the inhabitants of Canterbury embraced most organisational forms of athletics with ardour during the Colonial period, they were less enthusiastic about the professional variant known as pedestrianism. Whereas Popular, rural, Caledonian and Friendly Society sports meetings throughout the Province frequently drew thousands of spectators, pedestrian contests rarely attracted more than a few hundred. Thus, while pedestrianism enjoyed very strong support among the working classes in England, North America and the Australian Colonies, and a limited following in some parts of New Zealand, it did not become a fixture in the sporting landscape of Canterbury. The appeal of pedestrianism was not diminished in Canterbury by any association with dishonest practices of the type which brought it into disrepute in Australia, or because of attacks mounted on its tendency to encourage vice and public disorder akin to those made by ‘respectable citizens’ in Britain.<sup>2</sup> Professional athletics were conducted with more integrity in the Province than elsewhere in the world, and the urban élites and middling classes expressed no overt hostility towards pedestrians and their activities at least prior to 1880. Thus, probably as a consequence of the general enthusiasm among the settler population for athletic sports, pedestrianism gained at least a foothold in Canterbury from the early 1870s. However, it remained less popular than other sports discussed in this thesis, due largely to the lack of

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<sup>1</sup> LT, 30 January 1880.

<sup>2</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1987, pp.132-3.

either a gold rush or a large working class population which provided the money required to sustain professional sports in Australia and Britain.

Pedestrianism was a well established activity in Britain by 1850. Consequent upon the rapid and massive urbanisation wrought by the Industrial Revolution, athletic sports evolved from folk games into new forms 'more appropriate to the environment of the modern industrial town.'<sup>3</sup> The open spaces required for athletics, or any other public recreation, remained at a premium in the new and swiftly expanding conurbations. Most vacant land disappeared beneath 'the bricks and mortar' of industrial or residential developments, while 'the rich' desired to have what little remained reserved 'for their exclusive use.'<sup>4</sup>

The saviour of athletics as a popular sport in the new urban surroundings was the publican. In some smaller centres, where the pressure on land was not so great, it proved possible to create and sustain sporting festivals which encouraged 'the development of a sense of community ... [transcending] social and class barriers'.<sup>5</sup> However, while the 'Bedlington Hoppings' and other such events were held in the public spaces of the coal-mining villages of East Northumberland, they were organised and sponsored by innkeepers and tradesmen from their inception as commercial enterprises.<sup>6</sup>

The publican was even more essential to the survival of athletics in the large cities. Attached to many urban hotels were open fields, some of which 'had been enclosed for a specific sporting purpose'.<sup>7</sup> To attract more custom, the publicans who owned these premises

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<sup>3</sup> Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, p.40.

<sup>4</sup> H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c. 1780-c. 1880*, Croom Helm Ltd., London, 1980, pp.79-80.

<sup>5</sup> A. Metcalfe, 'Sport and community: a case study of the mining villages of East Northumberland, 1800-1914', in J. Hill and J. Williams, eds., *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, Keele University Press, U.K., 1996, pp13-38, *passim*.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.27.

<sup>7</sup> D. Brailsford, *British Sport: A Social History*, The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 1997, p.68.

converted them into veritable emporia of sporting activity. Such houses typically provided facilities for every sport from quoits to pigeon racing, and served as both betting shops and 'the local headquarters of activities such as prize-fighting'.<sup>8</sup> 'Pedestrianism' flourished from the 1840s as entrepreneurial innkeepers arranged and financed contests which pitted local athletic 'heroes', who were usually of working class origin, against one another or against outsiders. Publicans profited as spectators, sometimes in their thousands, paid to witness matches and attended the prize-giving at their hotels afterwards. Pedestrian events were based on stamina and brute strength as much as skill, and were increasingly characterised by gambling, doping, cheating and fouling.<sup>9</sup>

The manner in which athletics matured in the Australian colonies closely resembled the later phases of the process as it had occurred in England. The earliest events were organised by 'entrepreneurial colonial tavern keepers' in Adelaide and Sydney who used pugilism and foot-racing as 'impromptu sporting entertainment for a drinking and gambling clientele ... of ordinary folk'.<sup>10</sup> The wealth generated by the gold rushes fuelled the rise of pedestrianism, and ensured that from the early 1850s one of the most remunerative circuits in the world was situated in Australia. Large crowds were attracted by the chance to bet on a competition and win 'up to £10,000 from the bookmakers at the ground'.<sup>11</sup> One hundred professional runners in Sydney and Melbourne made a living from the sport during the 1870s and 1880s, and leading 'peds' from England, Ireland and the United States were attracted by the lucrative prizes offered. However, as in England, pedestrianism was brought into disrepute as competitors engaged in various forms of deception. In order to 'make a killing

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>9</sup> J. Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes, 1870-1914*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993, pp.162-70; D. Watson, 'Popular Athletics on Victorian Tyneside', *IJHS*, Vol.11, No.3 (dec. 1994), pp.485-94; Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, pp.140-1.

<sup>10</sup> J. A. Daly, 'Track and Field', in W. Vamplew and B. Stoddart, eds, *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1994, pp. 255-8.

from the bookmakers' they competed under false names, ran mismeasured distances and 'ran dead' after placing large bets on their opponents.<sup>12</sup>

Professional athletics attracted only a limited following in New Zealand before 1890. However, in Otago, Scott Crawford observes, pedestrianism (in the strict sense of walking matches held over long distances) 'always enjoyed a degree of support'.<sup>13</sup> Much of this interest was aroused by the phenomenal performances from the mid-1870s of local hero Joe Scott, the first athlete from New Zealand to win a World championship. Other factors apparently conducive to the development of pedestrianism also existed in Otago. The discovery of gold in 1861 made the Province 'the wealthiest in New Zealand'.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, industrialisation occurred in Dunedin at a rate unparalleled elsewhere in the Colony during the 1870s and early 1880s, and the population of the city increased from 21,517 in 1871 to 40,950 in 1881.<sup>15</sup> However, the capital provided by gold and the growing urban proletariat was insufficient to sustain a remunerative 'circuit' of competition for pedestrians. Thus, pedestrianism 'failed to become established [in Otago] as a grass roots activity in the manner of rugby.'<sup>16</sup>

Opinion in other parts of the Colony was sometimes less kindly disposed towards pedestrianism. The editor of the *New Zealand Herald*, which was published in Auckland, scornfully dismissed the evident mania for 'walking races' which he thought gripped Dunedin during the mid-1870s. 'Almost every day,' he wrote,

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<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.257.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.258; R. Cashman, *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, pp.47-8.

<sup>13</sup> S. A. G. M. Crawford, 'A History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Colonial Otago', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1984, p.231.

<sup>14</sup> E. Olssen, *A History of Otago*, John McIndoe Limited, Dunedin, 1984, pp.56-66.

<sup>15</sup> E. Olssen, *Building the New World: Work, Politics and Society in Caversham, 1880s-1920s*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1995, pp.24-8.

we see a telegram that Edwards, Young [Joe] Scott, or somebody else has undertaken to do some extraordinary feat, or has walked a match, and won or lost ... in a certain time. Now, I rather wonder that the Press telegraph agent has not something better to do than to telegraph such rubbish. The whole interest of these matches lies in the fact that 1s. is charged at the gate, and, I presume, the proprietor of the course ... makes a fine thing out of it.<sup>17</sup>

‘That the performers have done anything to justify their names being wired all over the colony,’ he concluded, ‘may be safely denied.’<sup>18</sup>

Though pedestrianism attracted a strong following among the working classes in England and the Australian Colonies, and a more modest audience in Otago, it propagated no such clientele among any particular group in Canterbury and remained a relatively marginal activity before 1890.<sup>19</sup> Unlike Otago, Canterbury experienced no gold rush which generated great wealth and brought an influx of people from Victoria who carried pedestrianism with them and supported it avidly in their new habitat.

The first recorded pedestrian contest in Christchurch was run in Riccarton early in 1861 between two otherwise obscure individuals, G. E. McKercher and J. H. Lloyd. The same pair staged ‘the first race for high stakes in Canterbury’, when they competed over 100 yards along Papanui Road ‘between Dr Lillie’s house and Medding’s Hotel’ for £50 a side in July 1863.<sup>20</sup> The activities of McKercher and Lloyd aroused little sustained interest among

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<sup>16</sup> Crawford, ‘A History of Recreation and Sport in Nineteenth Century Colonial Otago’, pp.232, 234, 236.

<sup>17</sup> NZH, *Supplement*, 18 September 1875.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Metcalfe, ‘Sport and community: a case study of the mining villages of East Northumberland’, pp.13-38; Brailsford, *British Sport*, pp.68-9; Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, pp.162-70; Watson, ‘Popular Athletics on Victorian Tyneside’, pp.485-94; ‘Track and Field’, pp.255-8; Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, pp.47-8; G. T. Vincent, ‘“Stupid, uninteresting and inhuman”: Pedestrianism in Canterbury, 1860-1885’, *Sporting Traditions*, Vol.18, No.1, 2001, pp.43-55.

<sup>20</sup> *Press*, 21 July 1863.

the local populace, and pedestrianism remained 'a novelty in Christchurch'<sup>21</sup> throughout the 1860s. Practically all of the handful of contests undertaken in the city during this period were between pedestrians from other Provinces.<sup>22</sup>

It was the arrival of Alfred 'Young' Austin, 'of Australian celebrity', and his trainer Shell in September 1870 which eventually established pedestrianism in Christchurch.<sup>23</sup> The visitors organised a series of races against one another, against time and against two of the 'local amateur[s] of some note', William Pentecost of Rangiora and Charles Porter of Kaiapoi.<sup>24</sup> The modest success achieved by Pentecost in defeating the 'professional' Shell in one of three matches arranged between them stimulated a degree of enthusiasm for pedestrianism in Christchurch. Following one race he 'was greeted with a most boisterous ovation, and cheered nearly all the way to the [Plough Inn] hotel.'<sup>25</sup> Thereafter pedestrianism maintained a foothold in the city, with competition following the pattern established during the visit of Austin and Shell.

The pedestrians who were active in Canterbury after 1870 appear to have been drawn from the same blue collar occupational groups as those who became pedestrians in England during the same period. Charles Bowley and William Pentecost, the most prominent pedestrians in Christchurch, were cabmen. Of those dwelling in Timaru who can be clearly identified, Thomas Organ and John O'Connor were labourers while Tim McAuliffe worked as a stableman.<sup>26</sup> Very little can be determined about the backgrounds of the remaining pedestrians in the Province.

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<sup>21</sup> LT, 20 September 1870.

<sup>22</sup> *Press*, 4 August 1864; WP, 1 July 1865; LT, 9 August 1864, 24 June 1865.

<sup>23</sup> LT, 20 September 1870.

<sup>24</sup> LT, 27 September, 11 October 1870; WP, 22 October, 5 November 1870.

<sup>25</sup> LT, 27 September 1870.

<sup>26</sup> Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*.

The profile of the sport was greatly enhanced by the tour of New Zealand undertaken during 1871 by three of the foremost pedestrians in the world, Albert Bird and Frank Hewitt from England, and J. G. Harris of Melbourne. By the mid-1870s the small numbers of pedestrians resident in Christchurch and north Canterbury were being joined in their intermittent competition by an irregular flow of others from divers parts of the colony and beyond. During 1875 local men Charles Bowley, S. Collins, W. Frith, J. F. Gough, Theodore Jacobsen and William Pentecost were variously engaged in contests with William 'Young' Delaney from the United States, T. Skellie from Auckland and William Edwards from Sydney. Visitors in 1880 included Joe Scott from Dunedin, and J. M. O'Connor of Timaru, who enjoyed great success in Australia during the 1880s.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the occasional presence of prominent 'guests', pedestrianism failed to attract competitors on a scale to create a spectacle which could draw large crowds. Matches in any given year were both few in number and irregularly arranged. Moreover, because Canterbury had neither the large working class clientele nor the 'gold money' which financed pedestrianism elsewhere, the material rewards in most instances were very modest. These were available in two forms. The first was stake money, which comprised the aggregate of the sums wagered by each of the competitors in a race. Stakes varied from £5 to £100 a side, though sums of £10 or £20 a side were the norm.<sup>28</sup> Secondly, rewards were offered in the form of prize money, just as in standard rural sports meetings. The value of cash prizes in any single race ranged from £1 1s to £5 5s.<sup>29</sup> These amounts were trifling compared with the

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<sup>27</sup> LT, 15, 26, 31 May, 11, 12, 14 June, 17, 27 September 1875; 17 January, 20, 21 May 1880; WP, 5, 12, 19 June 1875; 24 January, 29 April 1880.

<sup>28</sup> LT, 9 August 1864; 24 June 1865; 19 March 1866; 18 February 1871; 22 September 1873; 10 November 1874; 14 June 1875; 20 May 1878; 8, 24 May 1882; 12 October 1885; *Press*, 24 June 1865; WP, 4 March 1871; 27 September 1873; 26 February 1876; 20 March 1880.

<sup>29</sup> LT, 10 May 1871; WP, 19 June 1875.



prize money offered at 'the focal point for professional running' in Sydney during the 1880s, the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel at Botany, where the stakes usually totalled £300 and occasionally reached £500.<sup>30</sup> Thus, while a few prominent pedestrians travelled to Christchurch they seldom stayed for any length of time.

Local athletes may have considered participation in the round of rural sports meetings held annually throughout Canterbury during the summer to be a better investment of their time and money than involvement in the pedestrian contests organised haphazardly in Christchurch. The cost of entering any event at the rural sports was only a few shillings, whereas participation in a pedestrian contest often required an outlay of between five guineas and £50 in stake money. Moreover, for a minimal expenditure, competitors in the sports gained several opportunities to win prizes comparable in value to those offered in most pedestrian matches. Prizes were awarded in cash to those finishing first and second in the majority of races at any sports meeting. Athletes willing to endure the strain could multiply their chances of making money by entering sundry events at a single meeting. The large number of meetings held around the Province during the Christmas and New Year period provided ample opportunity for fit and ambitious contestants to profit greatly from their exertions. A dearth of fixtures and relatively modest prize money ensured that pedestrianism in Christchurch could not offer comparable possibilities, and therefore failed to attract many competitors.<sup>31</sup>

That pedestrianism remained viable at all in the city was due largely, as in England and the Australian colonies, to the efforts of a number of entrepreneurial publicans. During the 1870s C. F. Money and J. Hebden, owners of the Victorian and Golden Fleece Hotels

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<sup>30</sup> Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, pp.47-8.

respectively, gave prizes, acted as stakeholders and served on the committees which were established to organise important contests.<sup>32</sup> However, the most enthusiastic promoters of pedestrianism among the publicans of Christchurch were the Dilloway family and Henry William Dunn, in succession the landlords of the Plough Inn in Riccarton between 1860 and 1875. The very first contest between McKercher and Lloyd in 1861 had been conducted at the Inn under the auspices of John Dilloway, senior. Whereas other publicans improvised their own grounds, or used those of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association, the licensees of the Plough Inn constructed and maintained a grass track in the paddock adjoining their premises.<sup>33</sup> Every local ped of any note raced several times on this ground, while the men of international repute who graced it with their presence included Austin and Shell in 1870, Bird, Hewitt and Harris in 1871, and Edwards in 1875.<sup>34</sup>

By the mid-1870s the Plough Inn track was being surpassed in popularity by three other venues. The Oddfellows' Hall and the Skating Rink both enjoyed readily identifiable advantages over the 'suburban' site. They were conveniently located within the city and were constructed with wooden floors which, though far from ideal, offered a more consistent surface for athletics than the open grass track in Riccarton which was sometimes 'wretchedly soft and spongy'.<sup>35</sup> They may also have had the additional benefit of being fitted with gas lighting, though it is unclear whether or not the Plough Inn ground was similarly equipped. Moreover, by using the Hall and the Rink, competitors could increase their chances of deriving a reasonable income from the charge for admission to an enclosed arena which could be levied on spectators. The prize money offered in most events was relatively insignificant. Consequently, "gate money" ... [was] generally regarded as an important item in affairs of

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<sup>31</sup> LT, 22 September 1873; WP, 18 March 1876.

<sup>32</sup> LT, 29 August, 2, 18 September 1873; 1, 10 June 1875; WP, 27 September 1873.

<sup>33</sup> WP, 15 October 1870.

this kind.’<sup>36</sup> Finally, because the two urban venues were permanent structures built to accommodate large numbers of people, organisers of pedestrian contests could more easily provide for the comfort of both competitors and spectators.<sup>37</sup>

However, the only venue to rival the Plough Inn during its hey-day was the grounds of the Agricultural and Pastoral (A. and P.) Association. Although this site could accommodate spectators in large numbers, they were difficult to enclose effectively. Thus, while ‘over 1000 persons’ each paid one shilling in order to watch J. G. Harris race M. A. Fox of Otago for £50 in September 1873, ‘quite 200 evaded the entrance fee’.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, it is debatable whether or not the fluctuating support for pedestrianism evident among the public warranted a heavy investment in elaborate facilities. Though matches involving visiting celebrities such as Bird, Hewitt and Harris in mid-1871, and Joe Scott in 1880, attracted crowds varying in size from 500 to 1,500, the vast majority of events attracted only small audiences of between 30 and 100.<sup>39</sup>

This paucity of patrons had inevitable consequences for the pedestrians. ‘Not more than one hundred and fifty paid for admittance’ to witness a race at the A. and P. Grounds in June 1875 between S. Collins of Christchurch and the American, ‘Young’ Delaney. The minuscule revenue taken at the gate, along with ‘the proceeds derived from the sale of ‘krect cards [programmes], barely covered the expenses incurred for advertising and prizes’.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> WP, 17 December 1870; 8 July, 26 August 1871; LT, 20 September 1875.

<sup>35</sup> LT, 28 February, 4, 8 July 1871; 27 September 1875.

<sup>36</sup> LT, 14 June 1875.

<sup>37</sup> WP, 24 January 1880.

<sup>38</sup> LT, 22 September 1873.

<sup>39</sup> WP, 13 May 1871; LT, 4 July, 6 September 1871; 27 September 1873; 10 November 1874; 20 September 1875; *Press*, 29 October 1883.

<sup>40</sup> LT, 14 June 1875.

Plainly, no pedestrian who relied on money from prizes or 'the gate' was going to make his fortune in Christchurch.

Indeed, even a leading pedestrian could expect to make little material gain from his exertions. William Edwards successfully accomplished a feat 'never ... performed in the Colonies before' by walking 105 miles in twenty-four hours at the Oddfellows Hall, Christchurch, in September 1875. Those present evidently did not expect him to benefit materially from the exploit. 'Just prior to the finish of the race', reported one observer, 'a subscription was raised for Edwards in the Hall ... of £13 6s 1d.'<sup>41</sup> Thus, 'upwards of 600 persons' who had paid to watch this well-known 'professional' athlete apparently considered that his subsistence depended at least partly on an act of charity. Several similar incidents occurred, suggesting that pedestrianism was not widely perceived in Christchurch as a means of earning a living.<sup>42</sup>

It is difficult to determine the extent to which the competitors supplemented their meagre earnings through the gambling which, as elsewhere, was an integral element of pedestrianism in Christchurch. Gambling reportedly presented English pedestrians with unparalleled opportunities to increase their personal wealth. 'At some of the £80 sprint handicaps at Sheffield,' reported *Land and Water* in 1873, 'books are made of £1300 and upwards, and an ordinary pedestrian may back himself to win £20,000 in an afternoon.'<sup>43</sup> Few competitors in Christchurch could raise enough money to place bets on themselves which would bring large rewards at the relatively short odds of three-to-two which were offered by local bookmakers.

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<sup>41</sup> LT, 27 September 1875.

<sup>42</sup> LT, 20 May 1878.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in LT, 24 April 1873.

Bookmakers considered the gambling associated with pedestrianism in general to be sufficiently lucrative to justify their presence at the vast majority of events. However, those among 'the gallery' who speculated on the outcome of an event were unlikely to profit greatly from doing so. Contests held in Christchurch involving distinguished competitors reportedly generated heavy gambling among spectators. Though the precise amounts wagered remain unknown, the individual sums appear to have been relatively small.<sup>44</sup> The gambling on pedestrianism which occurred in Christchurch was of an infinitely lesser magnitude than that which developed around the sport in England and Australia.

Honesty was another characteristic which distinguished pedestrianism in Christchurch from that which existed elsewhere. There is no evidence of any doping, cheating and fouling at contests involving the small cadre of pedestrians. This integrity was a source of some pride among locals, and considered worthy of preservation. They were shocked at the unscrupulous actions of some of the famous pedestrians who came to the city, particularly the 'cracks' Harris, Hewitt and Bird who arrived in 1871.<sup>45</sup> The three named 'champions' remained in Christchurch for several weeks and earned considerable notoriety for evidently taking money to appear in several contests with local athletes, but failing to 'show' at the starting line. However, the most spectacular escapade occurred when Bird, during one race against time, 'ran off the course, through an adjacent gate, and disappeared from the public view.' 'To describe the feeling of blank astonishment - the momentary stupefaction - which ensued', wrote one reporter, 'is unnecessary.'<sup>46</sup> The author of a letter to the *Lyttelton Times* attempted to absolve Bird from all blame for this extraordinary behaviour.

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<sup>44</sup> LT, 31 May 1875.

<sup>45</sup> LT, 9 May, 4, 18 July, 24 August 1871.

<sup>46</sup> LT, 18 July 1871.

A poor gate was not enough [to cover] expenses [or to pay] old debts. Now what would any man have done in Bird's place? Eleven miles to run, nothing for doing it, a bad gate, and a [debtors'] prison in view. Why, I should simply have "caved in" as Bird did, and who can blame him?<sup>47</sup>

While the spectators reportedly 'took the hoax in wonderfully good part',<sup>48</sup> the reputation of Bird and his fellow pedestrians among the wider public was severely tarnished. Though almost all local pedestrians were acknowledged to be inferior in athletic ability to most of those who visited the city during and after 1871, they were recognised as being far more honest.<sup>49</sup>

Ironically, it was at the suggestion of the abovementioned trio of 'champion pedestrians' that a significant innovation was introduced with the intention of protecting the probity of pedestrian competition in Christchurch. 'They purpose inviting a number of the leading citizens to form a committee of management,' reported the *Lyttelton Times*, 'in order that everything may be conducted in the most approved manner.'<sup>50</sup> Thereafter a committee of fifteen men was 'appointed', every one of whom had played an important part in the organisation of the Annual Sports in Christchurch or the Lyttelton Regatta. The dubious practices in which Bird and his colleagues subsequently engaged demonstrates that the committee was not an entirely effective means of achieving the stated objective. However, 'the leading citizens' of Christchurch were not dissuaded by this setback from establishing similar bodies to administer important events involving visiting pedestrians in 1873, 1874, 1875 and 1880.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> LT, 24 July 1871.

<sup>48</sup> LT, 18 July 1871.

<sup>49</sup> LT, 26 August 1871.

<sup>50</sup> LT, 22 April 1871.

<sup>51</sup> LT, 1 May 1871; 23 September 1875; WP, 6 May 1871; 27 September 1873; 14 November 1874; 24 January 1880.

Pedestrianism in Christchurch remained sufficiently honest to preclude the growth of opposition similar to that which developed contemporaneously in England and Australia. Furthermore, no inhabitant of the city appears, before 1880, to have voiced in public any sympathy with an English critic who denounced pedestrian contests as,

...a spectacle at once brutal and unscientific ... calculated to disgust all but the lowest betting men, and the coarse mob that regards a walking match with the same interest as that excited by a rat fight or badger baiting.<sup>52</sup>

No outburst of indignation occurred after a sick William Pentecost had to be 'carried off the track thoroughly prostrated',<sup>53</sup> having walked forty miles of a scheduled fifty in a match against Charles Bowley at the Oddfellows Hall in May 1878.

However, the sufferings borne by a youthful Joe Scott during his attempt to walk 'some 110 miles in ... 24 hours' at the Skating Rink in January 1880 prompted one vitriolic and comprehensive attack on pedestrianism.<sup>54</sup> The letter from 'A VAGRANT', which appeared in the *Lyttelton Times*, commenced with a scathing denunciation of pedestrian contests in general as 'stupid', 'uninteresting, and ... inhuman'. What, asked the writer,

is there to witness in them? You enter a building where you see one or more jaded and fagged creatures miserably plodding around a circle at the rate of some five miles an hour. Is there nothing more to witness? Nothing. The sole interest is summed up in the question whether one or more of the exhibitors will break down, and when.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> LT, 14 August 1879.

<sup>53</sup> WP, 25 May 1878.

<sup>54</sup> LT, 19 January 1880.

Scott had been coerced by those who wished to exploit him into prolonging his personal agony, thus providing a degrading spectacle. 'His feet were sore,' A VAGRANT observed bitterly, 'the skin was off his heels, and he had pain in his side, but his backers urged him on, and so the weary wretch plods on through the long hours in agony.' So pitiable, or so boring, was the spectacle that any spectators present were reduced to 'melancholy silence'. This 'walking farce' elevated 'a prize-fight' to the level of a 'manly amusement'. The correspondent had witnessed many pedestrian matches, and in every instance 'the drawn anxious faces, twisted spines, tottering gaits of the competitors, all betokened great internal agony and endurance.'<sup>56</sup> This astringent critique is noteworthy for its unconscious prescience in accurately portraying the future which awaited Scott as he concurrently secured the championship of the world and sank into penury.<sup>57</sup>

Nevertheless, the available evidence suggests that such negative attitudes towards pedestrianism were not universally held among the urban élites and middling classes. A VAGRANT was certainly prepared to condemn pedestrianism for its tedium and, more particularly, for its purported moral shortcomings. Others appear to have experienced few qualms about pedestrians or their activities. Prominent citizens were frequently involved in the management of pedestrian matches. Of special significance in this regard is Samuel Andrews, the owner of a plastering and glazing business and the first M.H.R. in New Zealand from a working class background. In addition F. H. Digby, a leading member of the Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club throughout the 1870s and at one time the Secretary of the élite Canterbury Jockey Club was involved.<sup>58</sup> Other members of the élites and the upper

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<sup>55</sup> LT, 30 January 1880.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> D. Grant, *On A Roll: A History of Gambling and Lotteries in New Zealand*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1994, pp.45-7.

<sup>58</sup> WP, 6 May 1871; 9 March 1872; LT, 18 September 1873; 14 April 1875; WP, 14 November 1874; 19 June 1875; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and



ranks of the middling classes in Christchurch and elsewhere in Canterbury proved equally ready to 'superintend' pedestrian matches during the 1880s.<sup>59</sup> Apparently there was, amongst the élite, a group of sports fanciers who did not care much about maintaining the tenets of amateurism.

Moreover, during the 1870s some of the most prominent pedestrians in Christchurch, including William Pentecost and Charles Bowley, competed in the sports of the C.A.A.C., the membership of which consisted largely of the sons of the those both in the urban and rural élites and among the 'white collar employees' of the urban middling classes.<sup>60</sup> The absence of pedestrians from the sports of the second C.A.A.C. after 1881 may be attributed to a combination of circumstances. Although the records of both clubs have been lost, it is certain that the rules of the original C.A.A.C. regarding amateurism, which had been formulated by a member of the club and adopted in 1873, did not specifically forbid its 'amateur' members from competing against 'professional' athletes. However, the later body probably operated according to the rules of the Amateur Athletic Association of England, which were drafted in 1880 and contained a strict prohibition against amateurs engaging in such contests.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, even if the C.A.A.C. had been able to accept pedestrians as participants in its sports, only a very small number of entries would have been received. By 1880 the few pedestrians who had been active in and around Christchurch during the 1870s had aged beyond the point at which they could compete with any hope of success, and virtually no new 'talent' emerged in the city after that date. Thus, a tacit fellowship which had existed in athletics throughout the 1870s between the working class 'professionals' and the 'amateurs'

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Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1965, p.6; J. MacAloon, 'The Christchurch Élite', in J. Cookson and G. Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards A City Biography, 1850-2000*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000, pp.198, 202.

<sup>59</sup> WP, 24 January, 13 March, 29 May 1880; *Press*, 24, 27 October 1885; 4 June 1887.

<sup>60</sup> *Press*, 21 April 1873; 28 March 1874; WP, 27 March 1875; 1 April 1876; 24 February 1877; LT, 23 March 1874; 22 March 1875; 27 March 1876; 19 February 1877.

drawn primarily from among the urban élites and middling classes was absent during the following decade

A miscellany of venues, almost all of them designed and utilised primarily for some purpose other than athletics, was used to stage pedestrian matches. In March 1880 the Queen's Hall, which was attached to the Queen's Hotel in Timaru, hosted a 'three mile handicap walking match for a silver medal' in which six local pedestrians competed, and also an attempt by Daniel Hegarty to walk 112 miles within twenty-four hours.<sup>62</sup> Pedestrianism was only one of a diverse range of amusements held in the Hall during that year. These included professional wrestling for stake money, an 'athletic entertainment' by a troupe of travelling gymnasts and several performances by the 'Lynch Family Bellringers'.<sup>63</sup> Pedestrian events were also held at the grounds of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club (S.C.A.A.C.) while 'Joe Scott, the champion walker of New Zealand' and 'Arthur Hancock, the champion walker of England', gave separate exhibitions at Maclean and Stewart's Bazaar in October 1885.<sup>64</sup>

The haphazard arrangement of the relatively few events held in the town during the 1880s prevented pedestrianism from becoming an institution which regularly attracted large numbers of spectators.<sup>65</sup> Evidence drawn from newspaper reports suggests that in only a few instances did pedestrian contests attract crowds of eight hundred. Thus, pedestrianism did not attract a strong following among the general population of Timaru.

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<sup>61</sup> Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, p.163.

<sup>62</sup> TH, 30 March 1880.

<sup>63</sup> TH, 9, 10, 14 April 1880.

<sup>64</sup> TH, 17 December 1881; 12, 14 October 1885.

<sup>65</sup> TH, 26 May 1879; 30 March 1880; 1 December 1881; 12 October 1885.

Though pedestrianism enjoyed a strong following among the working classes in England and the Australian Colonies, it enjoyed very limited success in Canterbury. Events were few and arranged only on an erratic basis. Christchurch and Timaru had neither the large working class clientele nor the 'gold money' which financed pedestrianism elsewhere. Thus, the number of spectators interested in witnessing any pedestrian contest, and particularly in paying for the privilege of doing so, remained limited. Consequently, the prize money offered was too meagre to attract prominent visitors or to induce local athletes to become deeply involved. The failure of pedestrianism to become firmly established provides an interesting contrast with the fortunes of athletic activity organised by formally constituted clubs.

# ***A SMALL KNOT OF MUSCULAR FRIENDS***



## ***CLASS AND ATHLETIC CLUBS IN COLONIAL CANTERBURY***

## CHAPTER 4

### ‘A SMALL KNOT OF MUSCULAR FRIENDS’ :<sup>1</sup>

### CLASS AND ATHLETIC CLUBS IN COLONIAL CANTERBURY

Athletic clubs which tended to foster ties among particular social groups became firmly established in Canterbury before 1890. Formally constituted athletic clubs were initially created in the Province during the 1870s. The first clubs were ‘amateur’ bodies, the rules of which stated that members were to be ‘bona-fide amateurs’ or to comport themselves at all times as ‘gentlemen’. These organisations drew most of their membership from among the élites and middling classes. The amateur clubs founded in Canterbury were less akin to a ‘closed’ organisation such as the Amateur Athletic Club, which dominated athletics in England during the 1870s, than they were to the ‘more democratic and less elitist’ Amateur Athletic Association which superseded it in 1880<sup>2</sup>. Whereas the Amateur Athletic Club and other similar clubs in England had enacted a ‘mechanics’ rule’ to exclude blue collar workers from membership, the Amateur Athletic Association and the clubs in Canterbury erected no formal barriers to prevent men engaged in manual occupations from joining their ranks. Any discrimination against working class athletics was indirect and informal.

By 1880 athletics in England had been transformed from an assortment of undisciplined folk games associated with rural wakes into a highly formalised and regulated spectator sport involving many thousands of urban dwellers. Amateur athletics developed in England in reaction to the dubious practices associated with pedestrianism. The promoters of amateurism believed that sport should be played as an end in itself for the benefits it

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<sup>1</sup> TH, 11 May 1881.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1987, pp.139-40.

bestowed on the physical and moral health of the participants, particularly with regard to the formation of character, rather than for any extrinsic rewards.

Although no generally accepted definition of an amateur was formulated until 1880, the Amateur Athletic Club of London was formed in 1866 'to afford as completely as possible to all classes of Gentlemen Amateurs the opportunity of practising and competing against one another without being compelled to mix with professional runners.'<sup>3</sup> The Amateur Athletic Club and other clubs of the same opinion located in south-east England excluded from their competitions all those associated with pedestrianism and, through the insertion in their rules of 'mechanics' clauses', the working classes in general. These 'influential' organisations shared the belief held by their counterparts in aquatics that the muscular development gained by physical labourers through their work gave them an unfair advantage over others engaged in sedentary vocations.

Restrictions of such an elitist nature aroused considerable resentment throughout the sport, particularly in the north of England, on the ground that the exclusion of genuinely amateur working class athletes was unjustified. This sentiment took concrete form with the establishment of the Northern Counties Athletic Association in 1879, which admitted to membership all authentically amateur athletes regardless of class. The resistance of the Amateur Athletic Club to competitors from the working classes crumbled before the threat by the Northern Counties Athletic Association to boycott the national championships in 1880. A final reconciliation was only reached when the Amateur Athletic Association which incorporated both earlier associations was formed later that year. The Amateur Athletic Association retained the prohibition on running for money but dropped the controversial 'mechanics' clause.'

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

The manner in which athletics matured in the Australian colonies differed somewhat from the later phases of the process as it had occurred in England. Unlike their counterparts in England the upper and middle classes in Australia promoted amateur athletics as 'healthy, manly and moral activities' to 'an easily distracted working class' whose attention was absorbed by pedestrianism.<sup>4</sup> The Adelaide Amateur Athletic Club was established by the 'colonial gentry' of South Australia in 1864 and the Port Adelaide Athletic Club, consisting primarily of working class athletes, was formed in 1870. Amateur athletics developed rapidly in the other colonies. The Melbourne Amateur Athletic Club was constituted in 1866 and the Sydney Amateur Athletic Club in 1872. By 1890 athletic sports were changing rapidly throughout Australia as the dubious practices with which pedestrianism was associated caused it to decline in the public favour, and the number of amateur clubs and controlling bodies proliferated.<sup>5</sup>

Organisational forms which enjoyed strong support among a particular class or social sub-group in England or the Australian Colonies<sup>6</sup> sometimes failed to draw a significant audience in Canterbury. Though pedestrianism did not become very popular with any particular group and remained a marginal activity in the Province, the amateur clubs which were established in both Christchurch and Timaru attracted a considerable following. By 1875 the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club (S.C.A.A.C.) had drawn members from among the socio-economic élites of the entire Colony. Trades Athletic Clubs, roughly

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<sup>4</sup> J. A. Daly, 'Track and Field', in W. Vamplew and B. Stoddart, eds, *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p.258.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, R. Cashman, *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, p.58.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, pp.47-8; Daly, 'Track and Field', pp.255-8; A. Metcalfe, 'Sport and community: a case study of the mining villages of East Northumberland, 1800-1914', in J. Hill and J. Williams, eds, *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, Keele University Press, U.K., 1996, pp.13-38; D. Brailsford, *British Sport: A Social History*, The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 1997, pp.68-9; J. Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes, 1870-1914*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993, pp.162-70; D. Watson, 'Popular Athletics on Victorian Tyneside', *IJHS*, Vol.11, No.3 (Dec. 1994), pp.485-94.

analogous in their attitudes and customs to the Northern Counties Athletic Association in England, were also established in the two main centres of Canterbury. However, unlike the amateur organisations, the Trades Clubs failed to attract significant support from any class and disappeared from the scene after a brief struggle for survival.

While amateur athletics in Canterbury was not exclusive, it was clearly linked to class, integrating both the élite and middling employees and sometimes the urban and rural élites. Of particular significance in this respect were the sports held annually at Christ's College from 1862. Established in 1850 under the auspices of the Anglican Church, and designed in imitation of 'the great Grammar Schools of England',<sup>7</sup> the College rapidly became one of the 'key élite institutions' in Canterbury.<sup>8</sup> Many of the early Fellows of the College had been old boys of English public schools or graduates of Oxford or Cambridge and prominent members of the Canterbury Association, the body responsible for organising the Canterbury Settlement. The great majority of pupils were sons of the urban and rural élites.<sup>9</sup> Christ's College 'remained at the hub of local sport and produced more than its share of provincial and national representatives' before 1914, particularly in athletics, rugby football and cricket.<sup>10</sup>

Though the programmes of the earliest meetings held at the College included sack races and other folk games, by the early 1880s the sports consisted entirely of standard athletic contests. Prizes were initially awarded in the form of commodities such as 'desks,

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<sup>7</sup> D. Hamilton, 'College': *A History of Christ's College*, Christ's College Board of Governors, Christchurch, 1996, p.15.

<sup>8</sup> J. MacAloon, 'The Christchurch Élite', in J. Cookson and G. Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards A City Biography, 1850-2000*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000, p.196.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p.208; W. J. Gardner, and R. Winterbourn, 'Education, 1850-76', in W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury, Volume II: General History, 1854-76, and Cultural Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, Christchurch, 1971, p.374.

<sup>10</sup> G. Ryan, 'Sport in Christchurch', in J. Cookson and G. Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards A City Biography, 1850-2000*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000, pp.326-7.



pocket-books, knives, chess-boards',<sup>11</sup> which would be of immediate practical use to the recipients. However, by 1880 the prize list consisted principally of 'silver cups and other trophies',<sup>12</sup> some of which were of considerable value. In 1874 some 'Old Boys' of the College subscribed a total of £40 for a 'Champion Cup'. This 'very large and elegant piece of plate' was awarded from 1875 to 'the competitor who gains the highest number of points at the sports' by excelling all others in a series of designated contests.<sup>13</sup>

An examination of the origins of those who took part in the school sports suggests that they were drawn from the socio-economic élites in Canterbury. Forty-five of the boys who competed in the sports held in 1876 can be identified with certainty. Twelve were the sons of runholders, eight were the offspring of ordained clergy, four were the scions of men who farmed substantial properties, three others were the progeny of wealthy merchants, two were the issue of a man of 'independent means' who was heavily involved in local politics and two were the children of prominent land agents. Five individuals were the sons, respectively, of an architect, a lawyer, a run manager, a Professor of Geology and an affluent butcher. The occupations in which the fathers of the remaining nine boys were engaged cannot be defined with precision.<sup>14</sup>

Of the forty-three boys who participated in the sports arranged in 1882, thirty-eight can be positively identified. Ten were the sons of runholders or proprietors of other large agricultural enterprises, seven were the offspring of clergy, three were the progeny of solicitors, two were the scions of prosperous merchants and two were the children of a man

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<sup>11</sup> LT, 12 December 1867.

<sup>12</sup> *Press*, 6 October 1882.

<sup>13</sup> LT, 20 October 1875.

<sup>14</sup> LT, WP, *Press*, various dates, September-October 1876; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*; *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950*, Christ's College Old Boys' Association, Christchurch, 1950, *passim*;

of independent means. Five other boys were, variously, the issue of a bank manager, an accountant, an auctioneer, a surveyor and the proprietor of a large tailoring enterprise. The callings followed by the fathers of the remaining nine subjects cannot be determined.<sup>15</sup> An analysis of the information available on competitors at the sports held in 1888 yields an almost identical set of results.<sup>16</sup> The propensity of the athletic festival organised annually at Christ's College to foster ties among the participants evidently pleased contemporary observers, one of whom considered that 'the evident *esprit de corps* could not fail to be gratifying to both masters and parents.'<sup>17</sup>

The sports also attracted spectators in considerable numbers to enjoy the day's proceedings. Most visitors were generally 'ladies, who seemed to take a very lively interest in the proceedings.'<sup>18</sup> The fact that 'a plentiful supply of seats' was routinely arranged for their use<sup>19</sup> indicates that those in authority at the schools expected 'the gentle sex' to be present in significant numbers. Because many of these women were the relatives or 'lady friends of the College boys',<sup>20</sup> the sports strengthened familial relationships and social ties amongst the élites. Thus, despite direct participation being limited to the boys attending the schools, the sports worked in several ways to foster a sense of solidarity within the socio-economic élité of Canterbury.

Athletic bodies which operated beyond the gates of the élité schools and were ostensibly dedicated to the 'amateur ethos', performed a similar function. However, the

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<sup>15</sup> LT, WP, *Press*, various dates, September-October 1882; Electoral Rolls 1880-81, *passim*; Freeholder Return, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III*, *passim*; Christ's College School List, 1850-1950, *passim*.

<sup>16</sup> LT, WP, *Press*, various dates, September-October 1888; Electoral Rolls, 1887, *passim*; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, *passim*; Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III*, *passim*; Christ's College School List, 1850-1950, *passim*.

<sup>17</sup> LT, 11 October 1878 (italics in the original).

<sup>18</sup> WP, 13 October 1877; 12 October 1878.

<sup>19</sup> LT, 10 October 1879; WP, 12 October 1878.

introduction of amateurism into athletics in Canterbury proved troublesome. One inhabitant of Christchurch quoted an Australian opinion to make the point that the 'English definition of an amateur is in my opinion much too strict' and could not be applied under the social conditions prevalent in the Colonies. Particularly inappropriate in Australasia was the mechanics' rule formulated by the Amateur Athletic Club and other similar bodies in England, under which 'an artizan from his social position is not ... classed as an amateur'. In fact, the Popular and rural sports meetings demonstrated that participants from all classes in Canterbury competed against one another in a form of athletics which was 'verging into a sort of quasi-amateur-professionalism'.<sup>21</sup>

The ambiguity which existed in the minds of the general population on this issue was illustrated, and perhaps reinforced, by the tendency of newspapers and those who administered sports meetings in the Province to use almost at random the terms 'local amateurs' and 'professionals' when describing the leading pedestrians.<sup>22</sup> For example, William Pentecost was counted among the 'very best amateur talent' in Canterbury when competing in Christchurch during 1870 and 1871 against pedestrians from outside New Zealand such as Austin, Hewitt, Harris and Bird. However, Pentecost was also among a group of athletes who were occasionally excluded as 'professionals' from various rural and other sports meetings.<sup>23</sup> A few people found the failure of the organisers of sports to maintain a clear and consistent separation between 'amateurs' and 'professionals' to be unacceptable, and considered that 'the sooner both are properly defined and kept in their own sphere the better for the athletes'.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> WP, 16 October 1880.

<sup>21</sup> WP, 25 February 1871.

<sup>22</sup> LT, 10 November 1874; 29 September 1875; 28 February 1877.

The first serious attempts to introduce amateurism into athletics in Canterbury were made by William Henry Wynn-Williams, who was for many years foremost among the organisers of the Anniversary Sports in Christchurch. Wynn-Williams was instrumental in organising two major athletic sports meetings in March and April 1871 from which ‘professionals’ were explicitly excluded. The first of these events marked the end of the rowing and cricket seasons, and participation was restricted to members of clubs engaged in those two activities. However, the sports held in April were a public festival arranged to celebrate the visit of the Governor of the Colony to Christchurch. It was evident to those permitted to enter both gatherings that ‘professionals’ were only prohibited from becoming involved as competitors. Thus, as the *Lyttelton Times* noted, some ‘enthusiastic members’ of the various cricket and boating clubs went into training under the ‘professional surveillance’ of the pedestrian Alfred Austin.<sup>25</sup>

Wynn-Williams was also behind efforts during the early 1870s to prevent athletes designated as ‘professionals’ from entering certain lucrative or prestigious events at the Anniversary Sports in Christchurch. Wynn-Williams was asked how the committee ‘were to distinguish between professionals and non-professionals’. ‘Simply use our own judgement,’ he replied, ‘and when they offer to enter themselves we say we shan’t have them. [A laugh.]’<sup>26</sup> Amateurism in this instance was merely the name given to a crude mechanism for excluding particularly successful local athletes, such as William Pentecost, who accrued considerable sums by competing annually at a number of ‘rural sports’ meetings throughout the Province.

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<sup>23</sup> LT, 27 September 1870; 1, 5 April, 5 May 1871.

<sup>24</sup> WP, 25 February 1871.

<sup>25</sup> LT, 10, 15 March 1871.

In January 1872 the first successful effort was made to create an explicitly amateur athletic organisation in Christchurch. The Canterbury Amateur Athletic Association had its immediate origins in the second Boaters' and Cricketers' Athletic Sports, which had been held a few days earlier. Three previous attempts to form such a body had failed. However, the strong public reaction to the 'many "swindles"' in which the visiting pedestrians Bird, Hewitt and Harris had indulged while in the city during July 1871 probably provided the impetus required for this venture to succeed.<sup>27</sup>

Membership was initially restricted to those belonging to cricket and boating clubs. However, in a move which was presumably intended to improve the viability of amateur athletics in Christchurch, the Association was reconstituted as the Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club (C.A.A.C.) in 1873 and opened to all bona fide amateur athletes. The provision that 'one black ball in four' could exclude an aspirant ensured that the new club would tend to draw its members primarily from among the élites and middling classes.<sup>28</sup>

The word 'amateur' proved fraught with difficulties for the architects of the new Association. Some of those attending the inaugural meeting thought the word should be omitted from its title, as 'there were very few in that room who, according to the English rules, could be looked upon as bona fide amateurs.' R. P. Crosbie presciently observed that the use of the term amateur 'would greatly restrict the operations of the association, and lead to endless discussion.'<sup>29</sup> More than a year passed before the members, of what had by that time become the C.A.A.C., finally resolved that any of their number 'who shall be proved to the committee to have taken any advertised money after 17th April, 1873, shall be

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<sup>26</sup> WP, 8 November 1873.

<sup>27</sup> LT, 24 August 1871.

<sup>28</sup> LT, 1 February 1872; 21 March, 3 April 1873; WP, 8 February 1872; 22 March 1873.

disqualified from competing ... at the meetings of the club'. However, nothing in the new rule prevented 'such winner appropriating the same towards a trophy.'<sup>30</sup> Thus, an athlete could win a cash prize but remain an amateur and compete at the club's meeting if that money were used to purchase a trophy for subsequent competition. One did not risk one's amateur status by competing against a professional, just by beating him and retaining the proceeds! According to one member, the sole distinction 'between an amateur and a professional' was that the former compete 'for plate or other mementos of the competitions' while the latter compete for money.<sup>31</sup>

The Sports of the C.A.A.C. were similar in their tenor to those of Christ's College. Programmes consisted of standard athletic contests for prizes and cups with a value of between £1 1s and £20. They were also gender exclusive in a way that many rural and other sports meetings were not. Entry to all events was restricted to men and boys, perhaps reflecting the origins of most members in cricket and boating clubs. Spectators of both sexes were welcome, and 'special arrangements' were made for the comfort of ladies.<sup>32</sup>

Physical evidence that the rules of the first C.A.A.C. did not prohibit competition between its 'amateur' members and 'professional' athletes was provided by the presence, as noted in Chapter 4, of some of the most eminent pedestrians in Christchurch at every annual sports meeting organised by the club during the 1870s.<sup>33</sup> This circumstance also indicates that while the C.A.A.C. was dominated by the urban élites and middling classes, the members of the club did not seek to create an unbridgeable distance between themselves and talented

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<sup>29</sup> LT, 1 February 1872.

<sup>30</sup> WP 12 April 1873.

<sup>31</sup> LT, 7 April 1873.

<sup>32</sup> LT, 15 April 1873; 23 March 1874; 22 March 1875.

<sup>33</sup> *Press*, 21 April 1873; 28 March 1874; WP, 27 March 1875; 1 April 1876; 24 February 1877; LT, 23 March 1874; 22 March 1875; 27 March 1876; 19 February 1877.

athletes from the working classes.<sup>34</sup> In the final years, at least, the C.A.A.C. would not allow 'professionals' to become members, even if they were allowed to compete.

The patronage of the local élité could not prevent the C.A.A.C from collapsing in 1877. It is possible that the rule against 'professionals' kept membership low and led to the collapse. 'The fault does not lie with the public', wrote a correspondent for the *Lyttelton Times*,

nor with a great portion of the local athletes. It is simply a case of divided efforts and interests in a community which is not large enough to permit such a division being attended with success. The Canterbury [Amateur] Athletic Club, for some years past, has made it a sine qua non that those who become members shall not compete anywhere for money prizes. The result is that all who cannot afford to expend time and money in practice without some prospect of return cannot join the club; thus a very large percentage of athletes are excluded.<sup>35</sup>

The scribe urged the organisation of an athletic club which would admit 'all respectable persons, without regard to class, as members, and [make] it optional for the prizes to be taken in money or plate'.<sup>36</sup>

The second Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club was established three years later, an action which was probably facilitated an increase in the population of Christchurch and its precincts. The population of the city rose from 33,568 in 1878 to 42,093 in 1881.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the population increased some 25%.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the C.A.A.C. decided to allow boys from

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<sup>34</sup> LT, 27 March, 3, 7 April, 1873; 23 March 1874; 5 March 1875; Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, *passim*. *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950*, *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> LT, 19 February 1877.

<sup>36</sup> LT, 19 February 1877.

<sup>37</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1881.

<sup>38</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1878, 'Distribution of Population in County Ridings', Table XXIII; 1881, 'Distribution of Population in County Ridings', Table XXIV.

Christ's College and the slightly less elitist Christchurch Boys' High School<sup>39</sup>, which had been established only one year earlier, to participate in its annual sports.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the club created a pool of potential members among the hundreds of pupils enrolled at the two schools.

The architects of the new organisation evidently paid little heed to the advice proffered in the *Lyttelton Times* three years earlier. Members were required to pay an annual subscription of £1. This device largely determined that the new club would attract its membership from among the same socio-economic groups as had its predecessor. The executive offices and the committee of the C.A.A.C. were largely the preserve of the urban élites.<sup>41</sup> Many of these individuals, such as W. H. Wynn-Williams, C. C. Corfe, J. Stanley Monck and Montague Lewin, had occupied positions of authority in the original club during the 1870s.

Sufficient information can be gathered, particularly from the *Electoral Rolls*, to enable the identification of thirty individuals from among an active rank-and-file membership known to number 116 in October 1880.<sup>42</sup> The data presented in Table 4.1 indicates that they were drawn predominantly from the urban élite and middling classes. Thirteen of the group had been pupils at Christ's College. Seven were the sons of men who held leases on major pastoral properties in the province, two others were the scions of prominent auctioneers in Christchurch, and one the offspring of a successful land agent.<sup>43</sup> Several of these patriarchs were active in the political life of Canterbury. Two of the runholders, both of the auctioneers,

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<sup>39</sup> Although Boy's High was less elitist than Christ's College, any secondary education in this period put one close to the élites. Thus athletics, cricket and football had an influx of new recruits from another class.

<sup>40</sup> *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950*, p.602.

<sup>41</sup> LT, 8 October 1880; 28 October 1882; 31 October 1887.

<sup>42</sup> LT, 8 October 1880.



the land agent and two others upon whom occupational information is lacking, had at various times been elected to the Provincial Council. One of the runholders and one of the auctioneers had each served terms as members of the House of Representatives.

The remainder for whom no information could be found in the *Rolls* were probably absent for the reasons discussed in Appendix A, in particular their youth or tardiness in enrolling to vote. On the other hand, while the group of unidentified members might possibly have included individuals engaged in blue collar occupations, points made in the same codicil suggest there are no grounds for believing that the working classes were present in numbers greater than the data displayed in Table 4.1 would indicate.

**TABLE 4.1**  
**CANTERBURY AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1881<sup>44</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	6
(b) Major rural proprietors	1
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	7
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	9*
(b) Semi-professionals	3
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	2
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	3
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*includes two students enrolled at Tertiary institutions.

The evidence presented in Table 4.2 suggests that the social composition of the C.A.A.C. had not changed in 1885. Though only twenty-three of 172 members can be positively identified, the apparent anonymity of the majority might once again be reasonably

<sup>43</sup> LT, 7 March 1881; Electoral Rolls, 1880-81, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950, passim*.

accounted for by reference to the factors which hindered efforts to identify those who were members of the club in 1881.

**TABLE 4.2**  
**CANTERBURY AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1885<sup>45</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	3
(b) Major rural proprietors	6
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
(d) University student	1
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	11*
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	1
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	2
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

The élité group consisted primarily of lawyers, medical practitioners and Masters at Christ's College. Most of those categorised as being members of the middling classes were clerks employed in banking, insurance and mercantile concerns. Thus, the available data indicates that the C.A.A.C. tended to foster relationships among the urban élité and white collar employees in Canterbury.

As also explained in the previous Chapter, pedestrians were absent from the sports of the second C.A.A.C. which was established in 1881. The rules of the Amateur Athletic Association of England, under which the club probably operated, specifically forbade amateurs to compete with professionals under any circumstances. Moreover, virtually no

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<sup>44</sup> See Information on Sources in Appendix A. LT, *Press*, various dates, September 1880 – March 1881; Electoral Rolls, 1880-81, *passim*; Freedholders Return; *passim*; *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950, passim*.

pedestrians were operating in and around Christchurch after 1880. However, from 1882, the Club added to its sports; foot-races, over distances varying between one hundred yards and three miles, for 'boys at Christ's College and [Christchurch Boys'] High School'.<sup>46</sup> Through these contests the club expedited the process, initiated at the school sports, by which boys from well off families were integrated into the socio-economic élite and absorbed its values through collective participation in leisure activities conducted under very specific rules and conditions. However, the decision to introduce events for juveniles may also have been taken in the hope that parents would be attracted to the meetings as paying spectators and that the boys themselves would join the ranks of the club once they had left school.

Any hopes that the Club would attract large crowds to its meetings were soon dashed. A pattern of small crowds and frustrated ambitions was established at the inaugural sports of the second club in March 1881. The public, 'in fact, did not roll up as fondly as expected' at any of the meetings held throughout the 1880s.<sup>47</sup> One writer lamented in October 1888 that 'the Christchurch public have evidently lost their taste for athletic exercises, and the Club seems to have exhausted every effort to popularise the meetings without any appreciable measure of success.'<sup>48</sup> The ostensibly modest attendance at the sports two years later suggests that such pessimism was justified.<sup>49</sup>

Such crowds as did gather at the sports were apparently composed of persons drawn from the same classes as the competitors themselves. The *Lyttelton Times* related that at the

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<sup>45</sup> LT, various dates, September 1884 – March 1885; Electoral Rolls, 1885-6, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950, passim*.

<sup>46</sup> LT, 30 October 1882; 29 October 1883; 31 October 1887; Caroline Daley states that from 1893 the Auckland Amateur Athletic Club also included races for boys from the public schools in the programmes of their annual meetings, so that these adolescents could learn how to be 'good citizens' by imitating the adult competitors; C. Daley, 'A Gendered Domain: Leisure in Auckland, 1890-1940', in C. Daley and D. Montgomerie, eds, *The Gendered Kiwi*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1999, pp.87-112.

<sup>47</sup> LT, 7 March 1881; 9 November 1885; 29 October 1887.

<sup>48</sup> LT, 27 October 1888.

meeting held in November 1885 ‘Several of the grand stand seats were filled with ladies, and the boys of Christ’s College and the High School showed their interest in the gathering by attending in force.’<sup>50</sup>

From November 1882 the sports were carried out at Lancaster Park, an enclosed ground for admission to which a charge could be imposed. This facility had been constructed at a cost of £5,240 only the year before. Most of the money had been raised through the creation of the Canterbury Cricket and Athletic Sports Company Limited, which issued 450 shares valued at £10 each to a consortium of fifty gentlemen who were prominent in the sporting life of Christchurch. The rate of interest payable on these shares was fixed at seven percent. Thus, the Company was driven by the usual commercial imperatives to provide a regular return to its shareholders. However, the Park consistently lost money throughout the 1880s.<sup>51</sup>

Any sporting body wishing to use the venue was required to relinquish twenty percent of whatever revenues it might raise from ‘Entrance money [taken] at the Gates and Pavilion, and Booth money’ for the privilege.<sup>52</sup> The C.A.A.C. charged 1s for admission to its sports during this period, at which rate a crowd of four hundred would yield a gross income of only £20. This figure was presumably boosted by takings from the grandstand, and by sums paid by trades people for the privilege of erecting publicans’ and confectioners’ booths on the ground. Nevertheless, the deduction of twenty percent from what must already have been a

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<sup>49</sup> LT, 15, 17 December 1890.

<sup>50</sup> LT, 9 November 1885.

<sup>51</sup> T.W. Reese, ‘A History of Lancaster Park, Christchurch’, unpublished typescript [193?], MacMillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, pp.1-12.

<sup>52</sup> Canterbury Caledonian Society, Minutes, 25 August 1882, Minute Book Number 1, Canterbury Caledonian Society, Christchurch.

small sum eliminated any possibility that the club might make a profit, without improving significantly the financial position of the Company.

The meagre returns generated by sports meetings notwithstanding, the financial situation of the resuscitated C.A.A.C. was apparently quite sound. Prizes were awarded only in the form of medals or plate, but by 1883 the array of valuable trophies being offered was impressive. 'A challenge cup, value £100,' which had been presented to the club in 1880 by a group of affluent but anonymous 'ladies of Canterbury,' was given to the competitor who gained the 'most points ... at the meeting.'<sup>53</sup> The winner of each event at the sports was rewarded with two points, and the runner-up earned one point. Whoever won the challenge cup also received, as a personal memento of his victory, either a trophy or a medal worth £5. A 'Tug Of War Challenge Cup', valued at £10, was offered for competition between teams representing 'Amateur Athletic, Football, Lawn Tennis, Rowing, and Cricket Clubs'. Yet another 'challenge cup', valued at £12, was 'given to the school which wins two out of the three events' included in the programme for pupils of Christ's College and Christchurch Boys' High School.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the C.A.A.C. was able to generate sufficient capital, either from affluent benefactors or its own members, to hold sports meetings at the most modern and prestigious venue in Canterbury and acquire several expensive trophies.

However, the athletic body which most clearly fostered an awareness of élite status among its members was located in Timaru, the principal rural service centre and second port in the Province. The South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club surpassed its counterpart in the

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<sup>53</sup> *Press*, 20 October 1884.

<sup>54</sup> *Press*, 20 October 1884.

‘Provincial capital’ by drawing its membership from élite groups situated throughout the entire colony.<sup>55</sup>

Timaru gradually developed from unpromising beginnings as the initial ‘station cottage’<sup>56</sup> of run-holder George Rhodes and a collection of other cottages during the early 1850s into a thriving municipality with a population of 3,917 in 1881.<sup>57</sup> The town became the principal outlet through which the commodities produced by the large sheep stations and wheat farms located in the hinterland of South Canterbury were despatched to the wider world. Some 2,500,000 lbs of wool and 1,250,000 bushels of wheat were exported through the Port of Timaru in 1890.<sup>58</sup>

Though the circumstances under which the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club was established remain obscure, it appears to have originated in two informal athletic gatherings arranged in 1870 and 1871 by ‘a small knot of muscular friends’<sup>59</sup> resident in the Levels and Mt. Peel Districts. The club was formally constituted early in 1872 and held its first official sports on 23 May. Thereafter, meetings comprising a programme of standard athletic contests, to which ‘Throwing the Cricket Ball’ was appended, were held annually over a period of two days. As with the C.A.A.C. in Christchurch, membership, and consequently participation in the annual sports, was restricted to men.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> TH, 9 May 1878.

<sup>56</sup> O. A. Gillespie, *South Canterbury: A Record of Settlement*, South Canterbury Centennial History Committee, Timaru, 1958, p.170.

<sup>57</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1881.

<sup>58</sup> J. C. Andersen, *Jubilee History of South Canterbury*, Second Edition, Cadsonbury Publications, Christchurch, 1999, pp.99, 131.

<sup>59</sup> TH, 11 May 1881.

<sup>60</sup> TH, 24, 27 May 1872; 14, 17 May 1875; 8, 9 May 1884.

Prizes were awarded in the form of commodities rather than cash. The most prestigious prize was the Champion's Cup, bestowed on the competitor who obtained the highest number of points during the annual sports. The value of this trophy was stated to be 80 guineas.<sup>61</sup> Second in order of importance was the Ladies' Cup, which was presented annually to the S.C.A.A.C. by 'ladies of South Canterbury' and given to the winner of the steeplechase event. The precise nature of this award also varied each year, though it always consisted of a functional but exotic and richly-decorated object crafted from solid silver and often imported from Australia.<sup>62</sup> The offerings in most other events at the championships of the S.C.A.A.C. were mundane 'cups or trophies worth from £2 to £10 each,' which were felt by at least one contemporaneous source not to 'call for any special remark.'<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, in pecuniary terms alone, the value of the prizes awarded by the club was substantial considering that between 1870 and 1880 a general labourer could expect to earn approximately 8s per day.

The eschewal of cash prizes in favour of cups reflected the fact that, from its formal institution early in 1872, the S.C.A.A.C. was avowedly dedicated to the tenets of the nascent amateur ethos as it understood them. The annual sports elicited an outpouring of rhetoric in the columns of the *Timaru Herald* on the virtues and benefits of amateur athletics rhetoric which was unusual in New Zealand during this period for both its coherence and its prolixity. An editorial written in 1877 about the members of the club explained that 'There is nothing sordid, mean or degrading connected with their amusements, and all their operations are conducted on the principle that they have nothing whatever to gain except the friendship and admiration of one another.' The trophies for which they competed, 'though handsome and at

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<sup>61</sup> TH, 5 May 1882.

<sup>62</sup> TH, 11 May 1874.

<sup>63</sup> TH, 10 May 1872; 12 May 1873; 15 May 1874; 5 May 1882.

times costly, are not stakes, but simply records of victory; and their intrinsic value is nothing whatever compared with the extrinsic value of the triumphs which they mark.' The editor could not conceive

anything better calculated than these sports to bring out and develop all the best qualities, both mental and physical, of the rising generation. They teach courage, self-denial, perseverance, generosity, self-control, and brotherly love; they discourage every sort of sneaking, calculating, quarrelsome, selfish tendency.<sup>64</sup>

Such lucidity on the subject of amateurism was reminiscent of utterances made in England during this period, regarding what Dunning and Sheard describe as an 'an amorphous, loosely articulated set of values regarding the functions of sport and the standards believed necessary' for their realisation.<sup>65</sup>

Though the members seldom engaged in such flights of articulate self-analysis, the S.C.A.A.C. demonstrated through its statutes a commitment to what the members understood to be amateurism. The General and Racing Rules of the club were formulated to ensure that the greatest possible distance was maintained between its members on the one hand, and professional athletes and their practices on the other. Racing Rule I stated that 'No attendant [is] to accompany [a] competitor on the scratch or in the race'. Racing Rule V strictly forbade 'Jostling, or running across, or wilfully obstructing so as to impede another's progress', on pain of disqualification from the race or, if the Committee felt so inclined, from the entire meeting. The determination of the club to maintain itself as a preserve of amateurism was expressed most forcefully in General Rule XII, which proclaimed that

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<sup>64</sup> TH, 9 May 1877.



Any gentleman, after becoming a member of this Club, who shall compete in an open competition, or for public money, or for admissions money, or with professionals for a prize, public money, or admission money, or who shall run a match with a professional for money or a prize, shall *ipso facto* cease to be a member of the Club.<sup>66</sup>

This statute was effectively a transcription of the extremely restrictive edict enacted in 1866 by the Amateur Athletic Club in London.<sup>67</sup> A practically insurmountable barrier was thus erected between pedestrians and the ‘gentlemen’ of the S.C.A.A.C. The rule also eliminated the possibility of any competition between members of the club and those of an athletic inclination within the general population who participated in the numerous popular or rural sports meetings organised throughout the Province. These regulations were not promulgated merely with the intention of ensuring that the club adhered rigidly to an abstract amateur ethos. Rather, they operated in combination with several other rules to ensure that the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club remained a preserve of the socio-economic and political élites from throughout the Province and beyond.

General Rule V stipulated that ‘The subscription for all members will be One Pound per annum’, a sum equivalent to four day’s wages for most categories of unskilled labourer in Canterbury during the Depression of the 1880s.<sup>68</sup> Any proletarian who managed to accumulate sufficient capital to pay the subscription would probably have had his efforts to join the club frustrated by two other ordinances. General Rule I stated that every candidate for membership had initially to be ‘proposed by one member, and seconded by another’. A major obstacle was subsequently erected with the requirement that ‘Every application for

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<sup>65</sup> E. Dunning and K. Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, Price Milburn & Co. Ltd., Wellington, 1979, pp.147-64.

<sup>66</sup> *South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, Rules & List of Members, April 12, 1883*, South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, Timaru, 1883, pp.6, 7, MS 1983/20, South Canterbury Museum, Timaru.

<sup>67</sup> Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, pp.139-40.

admission ... must be sent to the Secretary at least one month before the name can be put up for ballot, together with the names of the proposer and seconder.’<sup>69</sup>

This process naturally provided the club with ample opportunity to delve into the background of the applicant and ponder the significance of what it had discovered. Assuming that the candidate survived the rigorous scrutiny to which he might have been subjected, the matter was finally decided by a ballot of existing members at any meeting of the club. However, no such election was valid ‘unless ten of the paying members do actually ballot personally.’ Even at this point acceptance of a candidate was not guaranteed for the rule stated that ‘one black ball in five shall exclude’.<sup>70</sup> Thus, gaining entry to the S.C.A.A.C. was impossible for anyone unacceptable to even a substantial minority of the existing membership.

Maintaining a position in the club was, in theory, almost as difficult as joining in the first place. A member was required not only to obey the rules of the club, but also to conduct himself at all times as a ‘gentleman’. Though it remained a rather nebulous concept, Timothy Chandler claims that ‘gentlemanliness ... meant self-discipline and self-motivation, a mastery of the passions, patience and the control of energy - it meant ‘character’’, a term which implied both physical health and ‘moral fitness’.<sup>71</sup> General Rule VIII decreed that ‘If any member shall be impeached [by whom was not explained] of conduct derogatory to *his position as a gentleman* and a member of the Club, or of infringing wilfully the rules of the Club, such conduct shall be submitted to the Committee’. That body, if it considered the

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<sup>68</sup> *Statistics of New Zealand*, ‘Average Rates of Wages in each Provincial District During the Year’, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888; Scotter, *A History of Canterbury; Volume III*, pp.60-63.

<sup>69</sup> SCAAC, *Rules & List of Members*, April 12, 1883, p.3.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*

transgression to be of sufficient gravity, was authorised to convene a general meeting at which the members might express their opinions through a secret ballot. If two-thirds of the members present decided 'that the accused ... has merited expulsion, he shall thereupon cease to be a member of the Club.'<sup>72</sup> Thus, any member could hypothetically be cast out subsequent to a subjective analysis of his behaviour by a small coterie of his compatriots whose judgement was formed by reference to the tenets of an ill-defined code of behaviour.

The installation in the hands of the club of such a powerful mechanism for controlling the conduct of its rank and file might have been expected to result in at least a trickle of expulsions. However, only one man appears to have been ejected under this law, following his conviction for having committed two murders.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, it will be shown that as a body the members of the S.C.A.A.C. routinely failed to comport themselves in accordance with either the letter or the spirit of the rule.

The various mechanisms examined above were nearly as effective in ensuring the exclusion of the working classes as any 'mechanics' rule'. One writer opined in 1879 that 'the Club has become an important and valuable social institution, solely from the soundness of its principles, and the hearty goodwill with which all its members strive' to apply them in practice. 'Its annual meeting', enthused the scribe, 'still stimulates the youth of this, and, indeed, of many other parts of the colony, to healthy and generous competition in manly exercises'.<sup>74</sup> Such comments create the misleading impression that a meeting of the

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<sup>71</sup> T. J. L. Chandler, 'The Structuring of Manliness and the Development of Rugby Football at the Public Schools and Oxbridge, 1830-1880', in J. Nauright and T. Chandler, eds, *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, Frank Cass and Company, London, 1996, p.25.

<sup>72</sup> SCAAC, *Rules & List of Members*, April 12, 1883, p.5 (italics added).

<sup>73</sup> R. Bowden and L. Welford, *125 Year History of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, 1871-1996*, South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, Timaru, 1996, pp.2-3.

<sup>74</sup> TH, 2 May 1878; 7 May 1879.

S.C.A.A.C. had the same broad appeal as a popular sports meeting. In reality, the club remained a bastion of the socio-economic élites of South Canterbury and beyond.

Precisely how many men were members the S.C.A.A.C. in 1878 is unknown, though fifty-one can be identified with certainty. A major difficulty in identifying members is that they resided in almost every Province. Thus, while the Canterbury electoral rolls used to compile the data displayed in this Table list the occupations of members, they only provide such information on those who resided locally. Of those identified, thirty-three were professionals, major urban or rural proprietors or managers of large commercial enterprises. The remaining eighteen were drawn from the middling classes.

**TABLE 4.3**  
**SOUTH CANTERBURY AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1878<sup>75</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	9
(b) Major rural proprietors	16*
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	8
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	5
(b) Semi-professionals	2
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	9
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	2
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*Includes three sons of runholders

The data presented in Table 4.4 indicates that nothing had changed five years later. With information extracted from a variety of sources, the most important of which are the *Electoral Rolls*, it is possible to identify with certainty 182 of the 233 men listed as active and

‘supernumary’ members in the rule book of the S.C.A.A.C. in 1883. A total of 101 were drawn from the urban and rural élites. Though the great majority of this group were resident in Canterbury, several were runholders, merchants or senior officials in Marlborough, Otago, Wellington and Auckland. A further seventy-nine were drawn from the middling classes. This latter group consisted primarily of clerical workers, managers of sheep stations and proprietors of small or medium-sized rural enterprises. Only two members of the club were employed in blue collar jobs.

**TABLE 4.4**  
**SOUTH CANTERBURY AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1883<sup>76</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	18
(b) Major rural proprietors	54*
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	29
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	25
(b) Semi-professionals	4
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	43
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	7
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	1
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	1

\*includes five sons of runholders

Many of those members who could not be identified were probably resident and registered to vote in other provinces, prevented by geographical mobility from enrolling in any electorate or under twenty-one years of age when the *Electoral Rolls* published in 1882-84 were in the process of being compiled. Thus, the S.C.A.A.C. remained an organisation

<sup>75</sup> TH, various dates, September 1877 – March 1878; Electoral Rolls, 1879-80, *passim*; R. Bowden and L. Welford, *125 Year History of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club*, p.4; Gillespie, *South Canterbury*, 1958, *passim*.

<sup>76</sup> TH, various dates, September 1882 – March 1883; Electoral Rolls, 1879-80, 1882-4, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; Bowden and Welford, *125 Year History of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club*, p.4; Gillespie, *South Canterbury*, *passim*; SCAAC, pp.6, 7.

which fostered ties almost exclusively amongst the *élites* and members of the middling classes who were judged acceptable by their social superiors.

While not readily susceptible to quantification, the evidence regarding the nature of the crowds attracted to this athletic festival reinforces the conviction that the club fostered ties principally among *élite* groups. A journalist explained in 1879 that the sports of the S.C.A.A.C. served ‘the excellent purpose of bringing together numbers of the old settlers and even of families and friends who, but for it, would probably never have an opportunity of thus renewing “the merry days when they were young.”’<sup>77</sup> Moreover, reports indicate that the number of spectators numbered between three hundred and one thousand, and that in most instances ‘the majority of those present belong[ed] to the classes whose time is chiefly at their own disposal.’ Many of these visitors viewed the proceedings from the comfort of their ‘private carriages,’ and arranged themselves into ‘cosy parties around plethoric hampers at luncheon hour.’<sup>78</sup>

Approximately one-third of those attending the sports were ‘ladies’, whose presence was adjudged by some to be extremely beneficial. ‘The great interest shown by the fair sex in the different events,’ wrote one commentator, ‘is no doubt one of the principal reasons for them being so well contested; and as long as their patronage is continued, we feel sure the club will flourish.’<sup>79</sup> It is possible that the annual meetings of the S.C.A.A.C. presented women with an admirable opportunity to meet and scrutinise potential marriage partners either for themselves or on behalf of their daughters. The sports were reputed to attract ‘the very pick of the young men of the colony’, each of whom showed the assembled company

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<sup>77</sup> TH, 2 May 1878; 7 May 1879.

<sup>78</sup> TH, 17 May 1875; 11 May 1876; 11 May 1882.

<sup>79</sup> TH, 12 May 1876.

‘what he could do with very few clothes on.’<sup>80</sup> It may have been this lack of clothes which prompted the club to introduce Racing Rule XXI in 1881 which forbade competitors to wear ‘any costume other than one similar to those worn at the athletic meetings of [the] English Universities’ of Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>81</sup>

Certain rules and practices of the club not only functioned to restrict membership to the élites but worked to alienate the wider public. From 1876 a charge of one shilling was imposed for admission to the ground on which the event was held. In justifying this tariff the club claimed that it had recently incurred a heavy outlay in the purchase and preparation of ‘a proper sports ground’ and it considered ‘in consequence that the public who participate in the sport provided at the meeting, should contribute something towards the expenses.’<sup>82</sup> The financial commitments of the S.C.A.A.C. became heavier still in September 1878 when it purchased another ground, comprising eight acres laid in ‘English grass’, from Robert and George Rhodes for £1,231 17s 6d.<sup>83</sup>

Regardless of its propriety, the negative effects of the admission charge on the interest taken in proceedings by the public appear to have been immediate and sustained. As early as 1874, the Mayor could usually be prevailed upon to declare at least a half-holiday on the occasion of the sports. However, despite being presented with the opportunity to enjoy an afternoon of athletics, the townsfolk often responded with indifference. Interest in the sports among the general public declined very markedly from the mid-1876. The tendency which had existed from the outset for crowds to be composed largely of the families and friends of

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<sup>80</sup> TH, 9 May 1877; 14 May 1880.

<sup>81</sup> SCAAC, *Rules & List of Members*, April 12, 1883, p.9.

<sup>82</sup> TH, 9 May 1876.

<sup>83</sup> ‘South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, Letter of Agreement to Purchase R.S. 2683, sold by R. & G. Rhodes to S.C.A.A.C., (1878)’, MS 125/9, South Canterbury Museum, Timaru.

the competitors and members of élite groups from other Provinces became increasingly pronounced from this time onwards.

Any mild dislike felt by the public towards the sports of the S.C.A.A.C. was probably exacerbated by the behaviour of the members themselves during the several days of what became known in Timaru as "Sports time".<sup>84</sup> Bowden and Welford depict this as a week during which most of the populace was convulsed with laughter by an unending stream of jolly japes perpetrated by 'The Boys' of the club and their friends, with the connivance of the local constabulary. Any ill-feeling was dissipated by prompt payment of compensation for all damage caused.<sup>85</sup> However, a correspondent for the *Lyttelton Times* suggested that the antics of the 'youthful athletes' caused many of the petty proprietors of Timaru to be convulsed by quite another emotion. Such was the destruction caused by one bout of revelry in 1879 that

on Friday morning the wrath of the trading community was too great for utterance, except in rancorous strings of adjectives which, if I even chose to repeat, would immediately be obliterated from this letter by the moral pen of the editor.<sup>86</sup>

It appeared 'most extraordinary' to the writer that 'the police should not bring the practical "jokists" before the Court for wilful destruction of property.'

Two factors allegedly rendered the perpetrators immune from retribution. The first was their social status. 'If tradesmen, or the sons of tradesmen, conducted themselves in such a manner', the correspondent believed, 'they would at once be dubbed "larrikins," and the highly respectable portion of the public would clamour loudly for them to be brought before

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<sup>84</sup> TH, 10 May 1882; 7 May 1884.

<sup>85</sup> Bowden and Welford, *125 Year History of the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club*, p.4.

<sup>86</sup> LT, 16 May 1879.



the Resident Magistrate.' The second determinant was the incompetence of the local constabulary. 'Unfortunately', complained the reporter,

most of the constables doing street duty in Timaru are of the type known as the "stage bobby." They are splendid wearers of white cotton gloves, and can do the measured step on the asphalt footpath with great style and precision; but beyond these military attributes they cannot be charged with the crime of smartness.<sup>87</sup>

Thus, it is understandable that most middling and working class people were unwilling to subsidise, through their presence at the sports, the activities of 'athletes' who were able to inflict considerable damage on the town without fear of retribution.

Resentment among the townsfolk was compounded by the fact that they were enduring this mischief at the hands of a body composed primarily of members of the socio-economic élite, and from which most of them were tacitly excluded. ONE AMONG THE MILLION informed the editor of the *Timaru Herald* in May 1877 that 'Regarding the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, some people refuse to attend these Sports because the members ... only admit as members [those] whom they choose.'<sup>88</sup> According to this correspondent, the only valid determinant of who played with and against whom was the principle of complete freedom of association. However, the perception that election to membership of the S.C.A.A.C. was determined on the basis of class was alleged by the writer to have aroused widespread resentment among the general population of the region.

The existence of such sentiments did not prevent amateur athletic clubs from organising one of the most 'interactive and supporting' organisational structures created by

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<sup>87</sup> LT, 16 May 1879.

any sport in the Colony before 1900.<sup>89</sup> On the initiative of the S.C.A.A.C. a group of élite clubs, including the C.A.A.C. and the Dunedin Amateur Athletic Club, collaborated to establish the New Zealand Amateur Athletic Association (N.Z.A.A.A.) in August 1887.<sup>90</sup> By 1890 the Southland, Hawke's Bay and Wellington Amateur Athletic Clubs had become affiliated to the new Association.<sup>91</sup> The N.Z.A.A.A. ensured that all of its affiliates followed a uniform set of rules regarding amateurism. Until 1890 the Association also determined which events at each of the separate annual sports meetings arranged by the various clubs would be accorded the formal status of contests for a 'New Zealand championship' in any given year.<sup>92</sup>

However, the negative sentiment inspired by the attitudes and practices of the amateur athletic clubs in both Christchurch and Timaru was given tangible expression from the mid-1870s. In April 1875 the Canterbury Tradesmen's Athletic Club (C.T.A.C.) was launched in Christchurch, apparently at the instigation of the pedestrian Charles Bowley. The rationale behind the establishment of the new club was simple. The C.A.A.C. awarded prizes only in plate and debarred any one from entering 'who has taken money at other sports'. Thus, working class athletes, who could not afford 'to lose their time and expend money in training without a prospect of some monetary return', were automatically excluded from competition.<sup>93</sup> The *Lyttelton Times* stated that the object of the C.T.A.C 'will be to promote competition' in athletic sports 'among the working classes.' This end could be achieved by offering competitors the 'prospect of winning a money prize to cover their loss of time and outlay.'<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> TH, 12 May 1877.

<sup>89</sup> J. Daly, 'Athletics', in W. Vamplew, *et al*, eds, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p.24.

<sup>90</sup> *Press*, 10, 17 August 1887.

<sup>91</sup> LT, 11 December 1890.

<sup>92</sup> LT, 31 October 1887; 19, 29 October, 1888.

<sup>93</sup> LT, 25 May 1875.

<sup>94</sup> LT, 1 April 1875.

The C.T.A.C. had a chequered existence. In its first incarnation, it organised only two sports meetings, in May and December 1875.<sup>95</sup> The first drew a crowd of over a thousand, while the second attracted fewer than five hundred. The club then collapsed. The club failed to attract spectators to its sports in 1882, with only five hundred attending those organised in May and a mere three hundred the meeting held the following November.<sup>96</sup> By December 1882 the re-launched C.T.A.C. had collapsed, due primarily to an inability to meet the expenses associated with conducting its sports at Lancaster Park.

Bowley wanted to create opportunities for working men who were being excluded from competition by the development of an increasingly restricted form of amateurism. He was in no way hostile to the élites of the colony and he was very aware of the advantages of élite patronage. The numbers in 1875 included a cross section of society, but with blue collar workers and petty proprietors the most numerous. During its brief existence the C.T.A.C. attracted several of the most prominent pedestrians in Canterbury, including Bowley himself, William Pentecost, A. O. Brunsden and J. F. Gough. However, the members also included George Stead, a wealthy grain merchant, and W. C. Maxwell (see Chapter one) the runholder and patron of sport who had sponsored an event excluding manual labourers at the Healthcote Regatta in 1872. His support of the C.T.A.C. shows that he was glad to help working class athletes when they competed against their own kind.<sup>97</sup>

In 1882, Bowley made even more strenuous attempts to attract distinguished patrons. He observed the 'common custom' for any new club to secure 'without regard to the class

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<sup>95</sup> LT, 25, 28 December 1875; WP, 29 May 1875.

<sup>96</sup> LT, 25 May, 10 November 1882.

<sup>97</sup> Lt, 19 January, 10 November 1882.

whose interests may be most affected ... some man of money or influence to act as president, chairman, or whatever'. Several 'leading citizens' responded to his solicitations. The Governor of the Colony, Sir Arthur Gordon, and the Mayor of Christchurch both agreed to serve as Patrons of the club. Three Members of the House of Representatives, including W. H. Wynn-Williams, also accepted posts as officers.<sup>98</sup>

**TABLE 4.5**  
**CANTERBURY TRADES ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1882<sup>99</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	2
(b) Major rural proprietors	1
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	5
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	7
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	18
(b) Semi-skilled	2
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	13

As might be expected of an athletic organisation over which Wynn-Williams presided, the prizes at the first meeting of the resuscitated club in May 1882 were awarded in the form of trophies similar in nature and quality to those offered by the S.C.A.A.C..<sup>100</sup> However, this may have been unsatisfactory to many of the members for the successful competitors at the second and final sports of the C.T.A.C. in November 1882 received their prizes in cash.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> TH, 12 May 1877; LT, 19 January, 10 November 1882.

<sup>99</sup> LT, *Press*, various dates, September 1881 – March 1882; Electoral Rolls, 1882-84, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*.

<sup>100</sup> LT, 25 May 1882.

The number who joined the club during its brief existence remains unknown. The membership was drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, though evidence presented in Table 4.5 indicates that a significant majority of the forty-nine who can be identified were engaged in skilled and unskilled blue collar occupations.

Efforts to establish a club dedicated to the promotion of athletics among the 'working classes' in Timaru enjoyed only marginally greater success. Following a blistering attack on the exclusiveness of the S.C.A.A.C. in the letters column of the *Timaru Herald*, the Timaru Tradesmen's Amateur Athletic Club (T.T.A.A.C.) was established in May 1877. Those behind the new organisation made no attempt to obtain a wealthy or influential patron. 'Instead of fawning upon these men', wrote one enthusiastic supporter, 'let us look to our own interests and try to manage our own affairs ... with as little exclusiveness and narrowmindedness as possible.'<sup>102</sup> In order that the club be as inclusive as possible, the annual subscription was set at the relatively modest sum of 10s 6d.<sup>103</sup>

Exactly how many members were on the books of the T.T.A.A.C. at any given time remains unknown, but research provides some interesting details about the club. Any concern regarding the extent of class-bias inherent in the *Electoral Rolls* should be allayed by the fact that information extracted therefrom, which provides the basis for the data presented in Table 4.6, indicates that in 1879 the membership of the T.T.A.A.C. was drawn primarily from the middling classes and the ranks of the blue collar workforce. Of particular significance, given the evident antagonism toward the S.C.A.A.C. within the 'trading community' of Timaru, was the high proportion of petty urban proprietors who joined the Trades Club. Among the

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<sup>101</sup> LT, 10 November 1882.

<sup>102</sup> TH, 12 May 1877.

<sup>103</sup> TH, 17 May 1877.

seventeen members from that year who can be positively identified, none was a member of the élite, while six were urban petty proprietors and nine blue collar workers. White collar employees, who mostly worked for the urban élites and were a major component in élite-controlled 'amateur' clubs, were conspicuously absent.

**TABLE 4.6**  
**TIMARU TRADES AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1879<sup>104</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	0
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	2
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	6
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	4
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	5

The information presented in Table 4.7, the nature of which further demonstrates the utility and veracity of the *Rolls*, shows that the same pattern of membership existed four years later when twenty-two of the twenty-five identifiable members were urban petty proprietors and blue collar workers. Table 4.7 also reveals that by 1883 there was one member drawn from the élites. He was Richard Turnbull, a prosperous merchant and MHR for Timaru from 1878 to 1890. Turnbull, best known for his 'evangelical piety and working class sympathies',<sup>105</sup> was probably motivated to accept the office of President of the T.T.A.A.C. by a combination of idealism and pragmatism. He would be doing his working class constituents a favour by promoting an organisation which fostered healthy and manly sports among them,

<sup>104</sup> TH, various dates, September 1878 – March 1879; Electoral Rolls, 1879-80, *passim*.

for which they would presumably demonstrate their gratitude by voting for him when necessary. His prominent position in the Club suggests that its members did not simply reverse the class exclusiveness of the élite, but were prepared to welcome prominent citizens who were well disposed towards them.

**TABLE 4.7**  
**TIMARU TRADES AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1883**<sup>106</sup>

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	1
(b) Semi-professionals	1
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	10
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	6
(b) Semi-skilled	1
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	5

It is also clear that the Timaru Trades Amateur Athletic Club did not necessarily reject the amateur ethos along with the exclusiveness for the S.C.A.A.C. In 1877 and 1879, indeed the Club adopted the ‘running rules of the S.C.A.A.C.’ and awarded prizes in the form of plate rather than cash.<sup>107</sup> This may explain why the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club for a time permitted the T.T.A.A.C. to conduct its annual meetings on its grounds which were amongst ‘the best... in New Zealand’. The S.C.A.A.C.<sup>108</sup> The action of the S.C.A.A.C. was allegedly ‘calculated to bring the two clubs into closer relations, and establish between them a fraternal spirit that will induce them to cooperate ... in the promotion of athletic sports in the

<sup>105</sup> Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II*, p55.

<sup>106</sup> TH, various dates, September 1882 – March 1883; Electoral Rolls, 1882-84, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*.

<sup>107</sup> TH, 17, 22 May 1877.

district.’<sup>109</sup> This attachment may have been strengthened by a very public exhibition of principled behaviour on the part of those who revived the Trades Club after it lapsed in 1877. The group insisted on raising £28 9s to clear the debts of the ‘old club’ even though the connection between that organisation and the new was limited to the name and a minority of the members.<sup>110</sup>

However, the relationship between the Trades and Amateur Clubs appears gradually to have cooled. The reformed T.T.A.A.C. adopted the rules of the otherwise obscure Waitaki Athletic Club, in preference to the ‘running rules’ of the S.C.A.A.C. A more notable departure from the practices which had been common between the two clubs in 1877 and 1879 was the awarding of ‘cash or trophies, of equal value, at the option of the winners’ prizes at the sports of the Trades Club held in 1880, 1881 and 1883. Clearly the relationship between the clubs had to some extent broken down evidenced by the fact that these two meetings were held at the ‘Old Show Grounds’, rather than at those of the South Canterbury Club.<sup>111</sup>

The Trades Club seems to have attracted large numbers of people from Timaru to its sports. Approximately eight hundred attended in May 1879, ‘at least two thousand’ in May 1880, and ‘fully 700 people’, including ‘a small army of youngsters’, witnessed the event organised by the club in November 1881.<sup>112</sup> Despite the evident success of the Club in attracting support from the general public, it lapsed once more at the end of 1881, perhaps an early victim of the ‘long depression’. It was revived, briefly, in September 1883. However, after organising an apparently successful meeting to celebrate the Prince of Wales’ Birthday

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<sup>108</sup> TH, 26 May 1879.

<sup>109</sup> TH, 26 May 1879.

<sup>110</sup> TH, 26, 29 April, 6 May 1879.



on 9 November, the Timaru Trades Amateur Athletic Club went into what proved to be a terminal decline.<sup>113</sup>

Forms of athletic endeavour which attracted a strong following within particular classes or groups in England and Australia did not invariably do so in Colonial Canterbury. Amateur athletics, which existed prior to 1890 in the form of the two clubs established in Christchurch and Timaru, enjoyed great success. Unsteady at the outset, the amateur clubs were flourishing by 1880, being well financed and backed by members of the social and economic élites of Canterbury and beyond. These clubs promoted the ethos of amateurism, which appealed most strongly to those who has no need of prize money, and their meetings fostered ties among members of the Colonial élites, including intermarriage. The influence wielded by the C.A.A.C. and, in particular, the S.C.A.A.C. was demonstrated in 1887 when they were able to persuade several elitist clubs from other Provinces to collaborate with them in establishing the New Zealand Amateur Athletic Association, the first and most enduring governing body in New Zealand athletics.

By contrast, the Trades clubs in both Christchurch and Timaru foundered. Their officers, perhaps, lacked the organisational skills of their counterparts in the amateur clubs, and they certainly had inferior resources. In their attempt to recruit working class members, the Trades clubs were compelled have membership fees much lower than the amateur clubs. However, even the reduced fee appears to have been a deterrent to many young workers. As a result in Timaru, and perhaps also in Christchurch, membership was lower than in both the amateur clubs and brought in correspondingly less revenue. The Trades also lacked large

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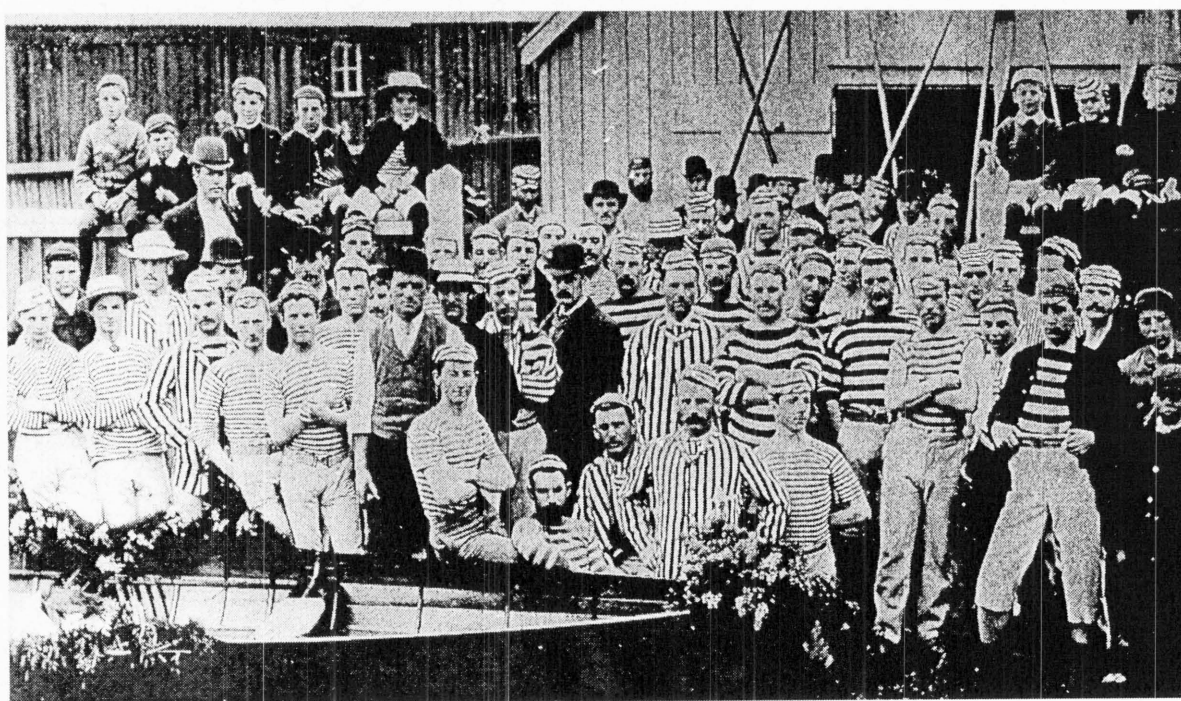
<sup>111</sup> TH, 14 May 1879; 16 April 1880; *Monthly Summary For Europe*, 1 December 1881.

<sup>112</sup> TH, 26 May 1879; 25 May 1880; *Monthly Supplement for European Mail*, 1 December 1881.

<sup>113</sup> TH, 10 November 1883.

numbers of rich patrons who subsidised both the C.A.A.C. and S.C.A.A.C. by donating trophies – sometimes expensive ones. While several small knots of muscular friends in Canterbury attempted to form athletic clubs, the success attendant upon any of these ventures was largely determined by the socio-economic status of each knot of friends and the resources which were available to them for such a purpose.

Avon Rowing Club c1890:  
note the number of youthful members.



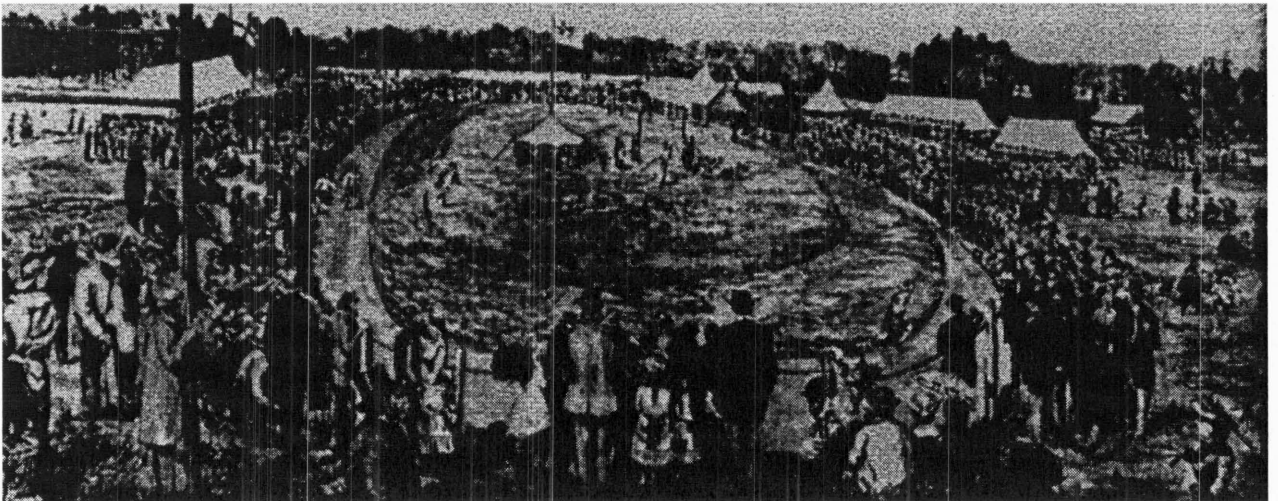
Canterbury Museum #991

# Opening Day at the Canterbury Rowing Club, 1890



Canterbury Museum #2358

Anniversary Day  
Popular Sports  
in Hagley Park  
Christchurch, 1883



Canterbury Museum #12258

(a postcard from a painting by C. Turner)

W.H. Wynn-Williams

A keen supporter and organiser of  
rowing and athletics in  
Colonial Canterbury



Canterbury Museum #6075



# Railways and sport in Colonial Canterbury: a montage of randomly selected notices from the 1870s.

**V. R.**  
**NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.**  
**RACES AND AGRICULTURAL SHOW.**  
**A SPECIAL TRAIN for Christchurch will leave**  
Dunedin at 8.30 p.m. on **TUESDAY, Nov.**  
Arriving at Oamaru at 1.0 a.m.  
Arriving at Waimate Junction at 3.5 a.m.  
Arriving at Timaru at 5.15 a.m.  
Arriving at Ashburton at 5.15 a.m.  
Arriving at Christchurch at 7.20 a.m.  
**FRED. BACK, General Manager.**  
General Manager's Office,  
Christchurch, Nov. 2, 1878. 1043/400

**CANTERBURY RAILWAYS.**  
**KATAPOI REGATTA.**  
**ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23,**  
**A SPECIAL TRAIN**  
Will leave  
**CHRISTCHURCH FOR KATAPOI AND**  
**RANGIORA.**  
At Half-past 10 in the forenoon,  
Returning from Rangiora at Half-past 11.  
By order,  
**JOHN MARSHMAN,**  
General Manager.  
Dec. 23, 1872. 8927

**THE NORTHERN RAILWAY.**  
TO THE EDITOR OF THE LYTTELTON TIMES.  
SIR,—Can you or the General Manager of  
Railways inform the public of Kaiapoi  
whether or not there is to be a late train to  
and from Christchurch on the night of  
December 16 (Anniversary Day)? And also,  
if any special arrangements are to be made  
whereby the large number of persons who  
want to come to the sports can be conveyed  
in such a manner as a civilized community  
have the right to expect? I think if we are  
races, the sooner the people of Kaiapoi raise  
their voices against such unfair and partial  
treatment, the better.  
Hoping this matter will be attended to,  
Your obedient servant,  
**KATAPOI-GIAN.**

**V. R.**  
**CANTERBURY RAILWAYS.**  
**TRAIN ARRANGEMENTS FOR**  
**CHRISTCHURCH RACES,**  
**APRIL 24, 1875.**  
**THE following SPECIAL arrangements have**  
been made, viz.:—  
Late Train leaving Christchurch at 11.0 p.m.,  
returning from Lyttelton at 11.30 p.m.  
**CHRISTCHURCH TO RACECOURSE.**  
Special Trains will run at short intervals from  
10.45 a.m. to 1.30 p.m., and from  
**RACECOURSE TO CHRISTCHURCH**  
From 4.30 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.  
Ordinary train in addition to above.  
Single Fares for Double Journey between all  
Stations.  
**JOHN LAWSON,**  
Traffic Manager.  
Christchurch, April 19, 1875. 7795

**V. R.**  
**CANTERBURY RAILWAYS.**  
**RACECOURSE AND SOUTHBIDGE**  
**SECTION.**  
**THIS LINE will be OPENED for Goods and**  
**Passenger Traffic between the RACE-**  
**COURSE JUNCTION and ELLESMERE (Sel-**  
**wyn), on and after MONDAY, April 26, 1875.**  
**PASSENGER TRAINS WILL RUN AS**  
**UNDER:—**  
Christchurch—Depart: 4.45 a.m., 4.15 p.m.  
Racecourse Junction—Depart: 7 a.m., 4.30  
p.m.  
Ellesmere—Arrive: 8 a.m., 5.25 p.m.  
Ellesmere—Depart: 8.10 a.m., 5.35 p.m.  
Racecourse Junction—Depart: 9.10 a.m., 6.35  
p.m.  
Christchurch—Arrive: 9.25 a.m., 6.50 p.m.  
**JOHN LAWSON,**  
Traffic Manager.  
Christchurch, April 23, 1875. 7715

**ASHBURTON RACES.**  
**RETURN TICKETS at single fares will be**  
issued for the first train ONLY from Christ-  
church to Ashburton on the 28th instant. Such  
tickets to hold good for return to Christchurch by  
any train up to the last train from Ashburton on  
the 29th instant.  
**J. STANLEY BRUCE,**  
Hon. Secretary.  
7756

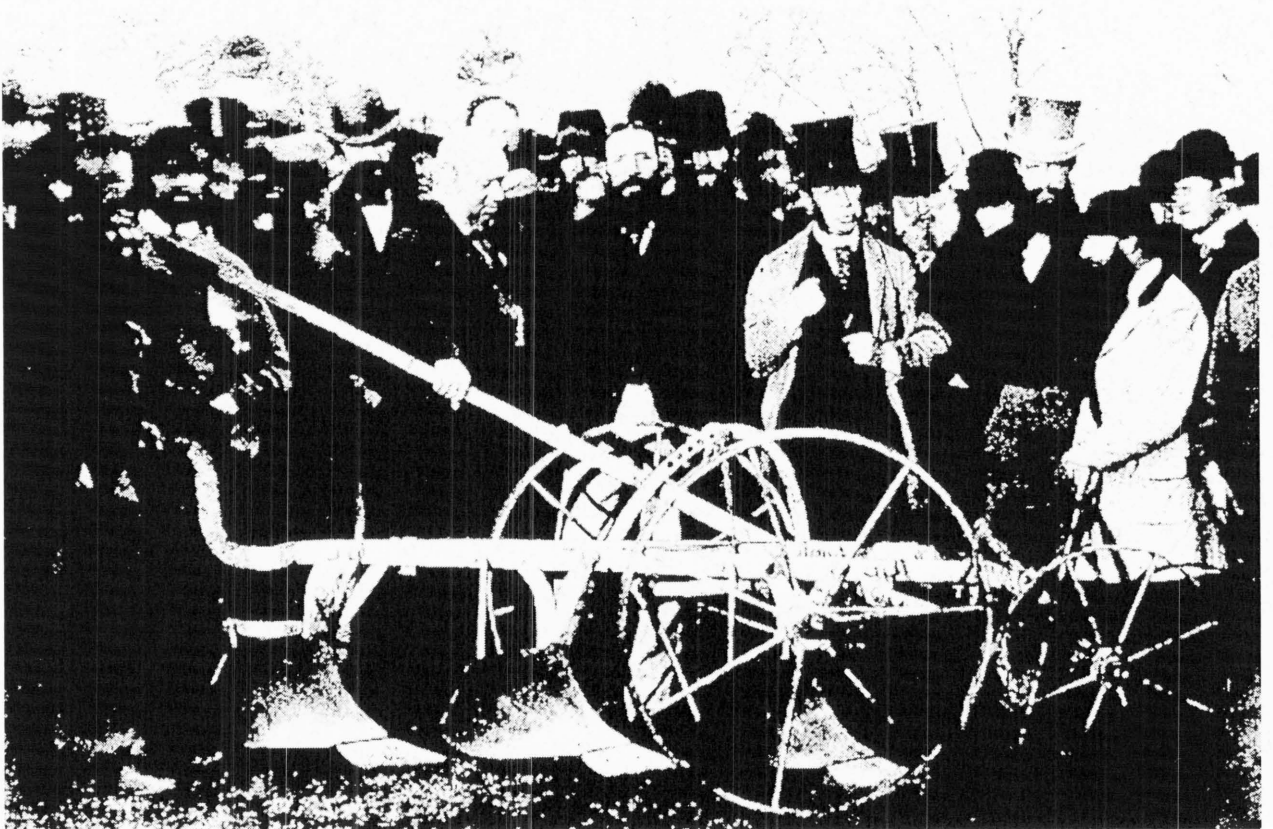
**Railway Notices.**  
**CANTERBURY RAILWAYS.**  
**QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.**  
**ON SATURDAY, MAY 24, Trains will**  
run as under, viz.:—  
**LYTTELTON LINE.**  
ORDINARY TRAINS, excepting that the 3  
p.m. Train from Lyttelton will leave at 1 p.m.,  
and 3.16 p.m. and 3.45 p.m. Trains will not  
run.  
**AN ADDITIONAL TRAIN**  
Will leave Christchurch at 11 at night, re-  
turning from Lyttelton at 11.30 p.m.  
**SOUTH LINE.**  
The Morning and Evening Trains at the  
usual hours.  
**THE MID-DAY TRAIN WILL NOT RUN.**  
**NORTH LINE.**  
ORDINARY TRAINS.—An Additional Train  
will leave Christchurch at 11 p.m., returning  
from Rangiora at 12 midnight.  
**RACECOURSE TRAINS.**  
From Christchurch—11 a.m., 12 noon, 1.30  
p.m.  
From Racecourse—4 p.m. and 5 p.m.  
**NO GOODS TRAFFIC.**  
**FARES AS ON SATURDAYS.**  
NOTE.—The Railway cannot undertake to  
give change to passengers.  
By order,  
**JOHN MARSHMAN,**  
General Manager.  
May 22, 1873. 4010

**Railway Notices.**  
**V. R.**  
**CANTERBURY RAILWAYS.**  
**LYTTELTON REGATTA.**  
**ON MONDAY, January 2nd, SPECIAL**  
**TRAINS will leave Christchurch at**  
short intervals up to 1 p.m., and Lyttelton  
from 4 to 7.30 p.m.  
The Train Service will be stopped between  
1 and 4 p.m.  
**SOUTH LINE.**—Trains from Christchurch,  
6.30 a.m. and 4.15 p.m.; and from Selwyn,  
3.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. The Midday Train  
will not run.  
SINGLE FARES for the double journey from  
all Stations.  
By order,  
**JOHN MARSHMAN,**  
General Manager.  
28th December, 1875. 9215

**RAILWAY FARES THIS WEEK.**—It is inti-  
mated by the Traffic Manager that single  
tickets issued at all stations having through  
bookings for Christchurch, will be available  
for return on the days of the English Cricket  
Match, those for a distance of over 50 miles  
being available on the day after their issue.

Illustration XIII

The 'First' Plough Manufactured in  
Canterbury  
Joseph Keetley (in top hat centre)

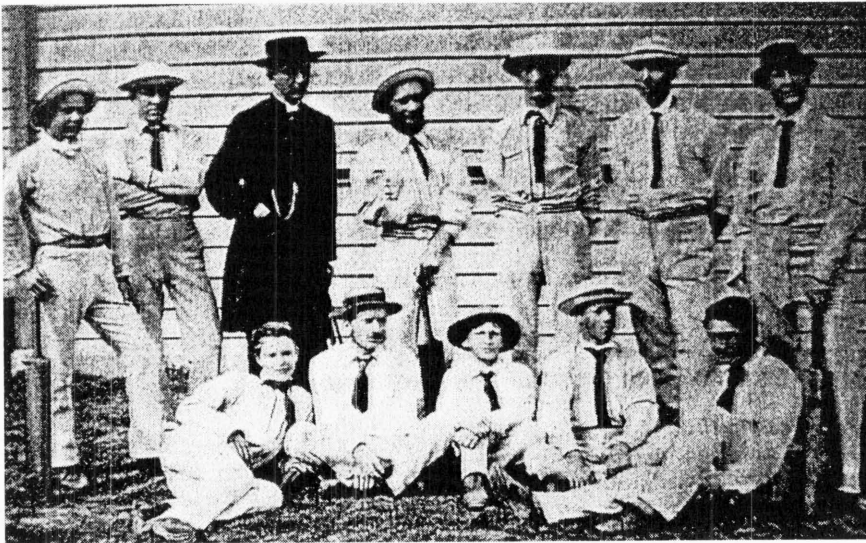


Canterbury Museum #6433



# Christ's College XI

## Christchurch, 1879



Christ's College Collection

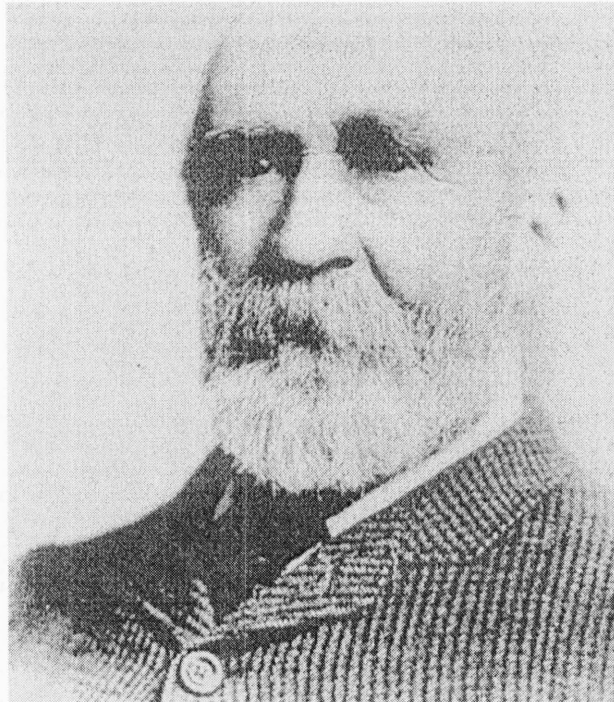
One of the many football teams which formed and disappeared during the 1870s and 1880s, an era of the search for the proper head gear.



South Canterbury Museum

R.J. S. Harman

Supporter, organiser, patron and player of  
cricket, football and other sports in  
Canterbury between 1860 and 1890.



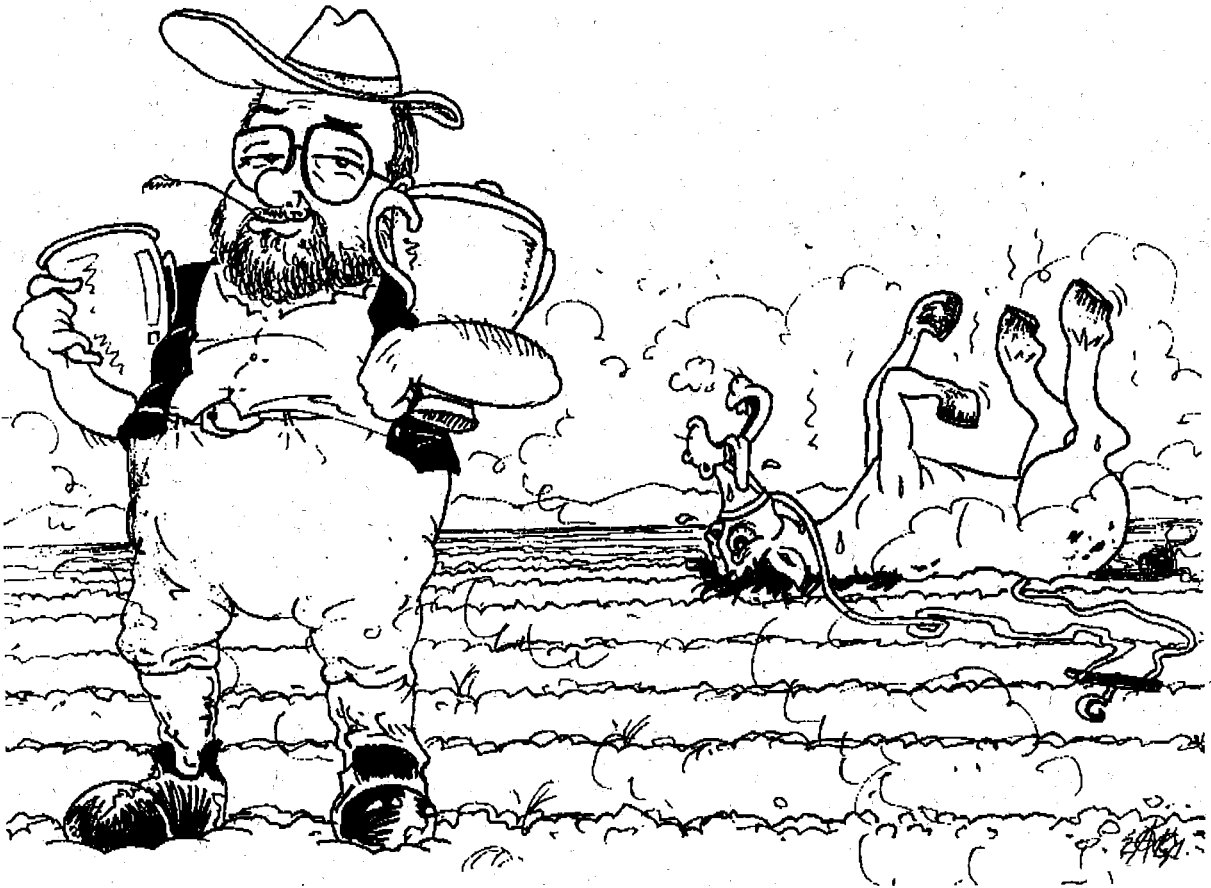
Canterbury Museum #4888

South Canterbury Football Club c1876  
with A.St.G. Hammersley  
holding the ball



South Canterbury Museum

***THE DULLEST KIND  
OF  
PUBLIC GATHERINGS***



***PLOUGHING MATCHES  
IN CANTERBURY  
1854-1880***

## CHAPTER 5

### ‘THE DULLEST KIND OF PUBLIC GATHERINGS’: PLOUGHING MATCHES IN CANTERBURY, 1854 - 1880

Of all the sports which were transplanted to Canterbury during the early years of settlement none was considered by the agricultural population to be of greater practical significance than the ploughing match. ‘They create,’ opined a columnist for the *Lyttelton Times*, ‘a spirit of rivalry among ploughmen that will have the effect of lessening, if not entirely abolishing, the present slovenly system of farming adopted by so many’. Moreover, by competing in such events, ‘those who are only amateurs in the agricultural business will be able to obtain a professional experience, which, although it should only exist in theory, will nevertheless be very beneficial.’<sup>2</sup> Thus ploughing matches were regarded as central to the development of arable farming in Canterbury ‘which is so essential to the working out of our great scheme of colonisation.’<sup>3</sup>

The ploughing match was accorded a similar degree of respect in the ‘soberly industrious society of agriculturalists’ which developed in South Australia during the 1840s and 1850s. The ‘social leaders’ of the colony considered this particular ‘sport’ to be ‘a creative outlet for the competitive nature of men’ which was also admirably suited to the improvement of the ‘lower orders’. Ploughing matches not only ‘encouraged yeomen to ‘aspire after excellence’’ but also exercised a ‘moral influence’ on spectators. Moreover, the presence at most matches of a wide range of additional amusements, including horseracing, agricultural exhibitions, athletic contests and ‘funfairs’, ‘encouraged the community to meet

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<sup>1</sup> LT, 15 July 1871

<sup>2</sup> LT, 12 August 1871.

and the classes to mingle.' By 1850 each hamlet was sponsoring its own contest and the champion ploughman of each district was acclaimed at a dinner held in the local hotel following the annual match. The bestowal of vice-regal patronage assured the status of ploughing matches and the attendance and support of the upper classes. 'Like many other sports practised in the new province,' writes John Daly, 'these rural pastimes reminded the colonists of 'home' and reinforced their feelings of still being British.'<sup>4</sup> However, it is possible that in Canterbury ploughing matches heightened the consciousness among colonists that they were constructing a rural community which necessarily differed markedly from almost anything left behind in Britain. These competitions constituted a practical means of altering the sense of identity with which most aspiring agriculturalists from 'Home' entered the Province.

Ploughing matches possessed a combination of characteristics which made them unique among the sports examined in this study. Firstly, they are the only activity which was directly related to work. Secondly, these agricultural festivals facilitated the evolution of the specific techniques of arable farming required in the new settlement and, consequently, the development of a local light engineering industry dedicated to the design and production of appropriate implements.

The committees which organised matches often served as platforms for more general initiatives related to agriculture such as the marketing of produce or the establishment of other communal institutions, particularly Farmers' Clubs. As social and sporting events organised within a Roads Board or Electoral District with clearly defined geographical boundaries, ploughing matches fostered a sense of community at a very localised level.

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<sup>3</sup> LT, 22 June 1872.



Match day was one of the few generally recognised public holidays in many rural areas and a valuable chance for local farmers to congregate, socialise, exchange general information on agricultural matters and observe aspiring champions at work. Indeed, members of virtually every segment of the agrarian community were involved in some capacity with the organisation or execution of a ploughing match.

Hopes were initially expressed during the late 1860s by columnists in the major newspapers of the Province that successful competitors from each District would enter tournaments in the other parts of the Province. However, such ambitions proved ephemeral. By 1870 the sport was dominated by a small group of 'crack' ploughmen drawn from a few Districts. Between them the members of this élite secured the major prizes at almost every significant event in the Province. Many able men declined to enter their local matches, feeling that defeat was inevitable. Management committees often attempted to remedy the situation by imposing discriminatory entry fees on teams from outside their Districts, severely limiting the number of classes in which 'non-residents' and the previously successful could enter, or by explicitly excluding outsiders altogether. Thus the scope for ploughing matches to become a medium for competition between communities was very limited, notwithstanding the opportunities offered by those few tournaments which remained open to all comers.

The ploughing match was also unique in that it constituted a nexus between work and sport. The closeness of this connection is demonstrated by the fact that competition, rather than incorporating 'amateurs' and 'professionals' as in athletics and rowing, was between two categories of 'professional'. Farmers and their relatives were pitted against what might

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<sup>4</sup> J. Daly, *Elysian Fields: Sport, Class and Community in Colonial South Australia, 1836-1890*, J. Daly, Adelaide, 1982,



be termed 'skilled agricultural proletarians', the livelihoods of both groups being dependent on their ability with the plough.

Ploughing matches were also of considerable material importance to many competitors. Performance in a match could increase the earnings and affect the employment prospects of both farm servants and disinherited farmers' sons, and consequently their chances of acquiring sufficient capital to advance in the community by becoming property-owners. Thus, until it went into decline at the end of 1879, with the onset of the 'Long Depression', the 'sport' of ploughing contributed in various ways to the material development of a majority of Districts throughout Canterbury.

These 'trials of skill' with the plough fostered the development of a community of economic interest through the impetus they gave to the development of techniques and implements essential to the success of arable farming in the new settlement. Considerable experimentation was necessary before the colonists could farm most effectively on the wide variety of alluvial soils which formed the Canterbury Plains.<sup>5</sup> The ploughing match was acknowledged as a central element in this process. Explaining recent advances in ploughing one commentator wrote in August 1869 that 'the yearly trials of skill, which are now a distinctive feature of every district in the province, are clearly doing their work in the promotion of improved tillage.' Through the good influence exerted by these contests, ploughing in the Province 'is becoming more adapted to the peculiarities of the soil'.<sup>6</sup> The result was 'better seed beds' and, consequently, higher yields.

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pp.51-2.

<sup>5</sup> R. G. Cant, 'The Agricultural Frontier in Miniature: A Microstudy on the Canterbury Plains, 1850-1875', *New Zealand Geographer*, Vol.24, No.2, October 1968, pp.155-67.

<sup>6</sup> LT, 12 August 1869.

This significant progress was largely due to the evolution of ploughs well suited to local conditions. Local blacksmiths and importers initially attempted to meet the demand for such implements by modifying British products, though apparently with limited success. 'It is generally known to colonial agriculturalists,' noted a columnist in Oamaru, 'that implements found to answer in the old country require, for adaptation to the soil of the colony, certain modifications, and dissatisfaction generally results with imported implements, owing to this circumstance.'<sup>7</sup> Consequently, from 1857 certain of the blacksmiths in Canterbury devoted themselves to the design and production of ploughs specifically for the local market. By the early 1860s implements from the workshops of Blythe, Anderson and Keetley appeared at matches alongside imported equipment made by Hornsby, Sellars and Barrowman.

Nevertheless, British manufactures continued for several years to outnumber the Colonial at most matches in the Province.<sup>8</sup> Hopes were sometimes expressed that the situation would rapidly be reversed. Commenting on proceedings at the Kaiapoi match in August 1867, the *Lyttelton Times* was

glad to observe Mr Keetley's ploughs so well represented, and as usual successful. We would prefer, however, seeing local manufactures still more encouraged, and trust that in future years we shall observe a still larger number of Mr Keetley's ploughs entered and less of English make.<sup>9</sup>

The desired outcome had been achieved at some ploughing matches within two years. Virtually all the ploughs at the Champion Match in August 1869 'were of the improved wheel class, but the provincial manufactured again evidenced by their large majority how

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<sup>7</sup> LT, 1 April 1870.

<sup>8</sup> P. R. Stephens, 'Farming in Canterbury', Part 2, *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, Vol.81, No.6, pp.503-17; LT, 22 September 1864; 8 August 1868.

<sup>9</sup> LT, 2 September 1867.

local enterprise is rapidly excluding English-made implements from our market.'<sup>10</sup> Further evidence of the growing 'provincial' presence was provided by the Templeton, Sefton and Kaiapoi matches during that same year. By 1872 the products of local makers outnumbered imported implements at almost every event in Canterbury.<sup>11</sup>

Concern over the manufacture of ploughs within the Province was motivated by economic and financial pragmatism, rather than a nascent ideological provincialism or 'colonial nationalism.' The increasing 'number of prizes taken by colonial ploughs' prompted one correspondent

to ask whether some of the money sent home for ploughs could not be kept here. This is essentially an article of local manufacture that deserves the support of the farmer, whose interest it is to keep every man he can in the province to consume the food he grows.<sup>12</sup>

Through the stimulus they provided for the development of specialised farming methods and machinery, ploughing matches contributed to both the building of community in Canterbury, and to the awareness among the colonists that it was not England transplanted. In this Canterbury did not follow the example of South Australia as Daly suggests where ploughing matches were sporting events to evoke feelings of 'Home'.

This lesson was frequently reinforced at both the Champion Ploughing Match of the Province, which was held annually near Christchurch between 1868 and 1872, and the Champion Classes at the various regional matches. Ploughmen from one District often introduced techniques or technology employed specifically in their area to an audience drawn

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<sup>10</sup> LT, 23 July, 12 August, 1869; WP, 24 July, 14 August 1869.

<sup>11</sup> LT, 24, 29 July, 15 August 1872; WP, 22 June, 27 July 1872.

principally from other parts of the Province. 'One day's contest in a case of this kind,' thought a knowledgeable observer, 'may teach a man that which he might perhaps be years in attaining in his own district.'<sup>13</sup> Competitors and spectators from the north of Canterbury evidently received just such a lesson when the entrants from Lincoln and Springston unexpectedly swept the board at the inaugural Champion match in 1868.

The committees which managed District ploughing matches occasionally undertook more general initiatives related to agriculture such as the marketing of farm produce or the establishment of other communal institutions, especially Farmers' Clubs. Several of the committee which arranged the inaugural Ellesmere Ploughing Match in 1868 appear to have collaborated with the Reverend W. J. G. Bluett, Vicar of Ellesmere Parish between 1865 and 1872 and an extremely energetic agriculturalist, in organising the Ellesmere Farmers' Club in April 1869. Though it enjoyed an independent existence for less than two years, this institution had far-reaching consequences for the development of arable farming in the Province. In January 1870 Bluett, the inaugural President of the Ellesmere Farmers' Club, organised the shipment to London of more than 20,000 bushels of wheat belonging to members of the Club. The grain fetched 5s 6d per bushel, approximately twice the price then being offered on the New Zealand market. The merchants of Christchurch and Timaru soon emulated the innovative Bluett, with exports from the Province amounting to 980,000 bushels in 1874.<sup>14</sup> Thus, a body which originated in a ploughing match committee instigated one of the earliest attempts at exporting cereals from Canterbury to Great Britain. Receipts from the

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<sup>12</sup> LT, 31 July 1869.

<sup>13</sup> LT, 21 August 1868.

<sup>14</sup> WP, 8 August 1868; LT, 13 July 1869; G. W. Graham and L. J. B. Chapple, *Ellesmere County: The Land, The Lake, And The People, 1864 - 1964*, Ellesmere County Council, Ellesmere, Canterbury, 1965, pp.171-3; W. H. Scotter, 'Canterbury, 1868-76: The Superintendency of William Rolleston', in W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury: Volume II: General History, 1854-76 and Cultural Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1971, pp.309-11.

British market provided a substantial component of the economic base which enabled communities in the Province to consolidate.

The committees of the Kaiapoi and Lincoln Ploughing Matches also moved to establish Farmers' Clubs in their respective districts during 1871. Both bodies intended to imitate the Ellesmere Farmers' Club, regarding the collective marketing of produce, though the activities of the merchants mentioned above rapidly rendered such activities obsolete. However, the promoters were also determined in each case to organise collective action by agriculturalists on a number of important issues for their mutual benefit.

The primary objective was the education of farmers. Even immigrants from agricultural backgrounds experienced difficulties. Circumstances, wrote 'Colonial', 'are so different here to what they are in the old country, that men coming here from Great Britain, to be successful, have to *unlearn* a great part of that which they already know in respect to agriculture'.<sup>15</sup> Evidently, the majority of farmers had little obsolete experience to 'unlearn.' 'The farming community of the colony,' according to one analysis, 'is, taken as a whole, a very different class of individuals when compared with the farmers of the old country.' The former were persons of,

... all trades and callings ... who emigrated ... with the ostensible objective of, as soon as possible, purchasing a section of land, and, figuratively speaking, becoming lords of the soil, producing sufficient grain to supply their own wants, and ... able to place as much as possible in the market.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> LT, 16 June 1871 (italics added).

<sup>16</sup> LT, 4 July 1873.

‘Most of them,’ the critique concluded bleakly, ‘are only amateur farmers, who, in many cases, possess the theoretical part of their business, and make miserable attempts at bringing it into practice.’<sup>17</sup>

The establishment of Farmers’ Clubs was widely held to be essential if the obstacles created by chronic ignorance of everything related to agriculture in the new country were to be overcome. C. E. Dudley considered that the proposed Kaiapoi Farmers’ Club would achieve the desired end by establishing a library, by providing a forum for the presentation of papers and by serving as a place for farmers to "yarn" about their differing experiences. Having thus exchanged ideas and gained the benefit of one another’s experiences, farmers would be able to avoid the blunders which they made when relying solely on their own knowledge.<sup>18</sup>

As an educational institution the Kaiapoi Farmers’ Club apparently lived up to the expectations of its promoters. In addition to statistics on the export of grain, several papers by members on stock and animal husbandry, ‘all of which have been of a highly interesting and instructive character in an agricultural community like ours’, were presented to the Kaiapoi F.C. during 1876. The exchanges of information which occurred at meetings sometimes had immediate, practical results. Subsequent to a "yarn" on the subject by a member named Pearson in June 1878, the Club resolved to ‘lessen the sparrow nuisance ... by sowing small wheat poisoned with strychnine ... spread on the ploughed land after sowing’. A ‘general raid ... on the nuisance from July 1 to July 17’ was organised, for which ‘the club will provide the required poison for the purpose to its members.’<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *ibid*

<sup>18</sup> WP, 15 July, 5 August 1871; LT, 16 June 1871.

<sup>19</sup> LT, 16 September 1876; 15 June 1878.

Farmers' Clubs were also advocated as a means of dealing collectively with another 'nuisance' - politicians. The ability to influence legislators was foremost among the considerations which prompted the formation of the Lincoln Farmers' Club. J. N. Tosswill told the meeting at which the Club was formed that 'if they wanted to urge some point of vital importance to them on the Government, they could bring a much greater pressure to bear in this way than in any other'. He suggested that 'they might make it a political club'!<sup>20</sup> This advice was accepted, and Rule 17 of the new Lincoln Farmers' Club stipulated that one of its roles was the 'advancement of the farming interest by combined political action, but that no funds be devoted to political purposes.' One member proposed that the word "political" be dropped. However, the Reverend A. P. O'Callaghan argued strenuously that to do so would undermine the ability of the Club to pursue the objective for which it had been established. Despite some misgivings among the membership, his appeal carried the day.<sup>21</sup>

Promoters of the Kaiapoi F.C. likewise believed that farmers acting in concert might successfully exert pressure on recalcitrant politicians. 'It is the duty of a Government,' claimed one correspondent in 1871, 'to render agriculturalists every assistance in its power in developing the resources of its country; but our Provincial Government can't see it.' However, if farmers were to 'combine their strength, and bring it to bear upon the Government, they might be the means of extending its somewhat limited range of vision.'<sup>22</sup> The Club occasionally tested this hypothesis. At their annual meeting in August 1878 'the members of this Club representing the farming interest of a large agricultural district' resolved unanimously to urge on the Government the 'necessity' of extending the Northern

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<sup>20</sup> WP, 5 August 1871.

<sup>21</sup> LT, 13 September 1871.

<sup>22</sup> LT, 16 June 1871.

railway 'to Greymouth, on the West Coast'. A copy of this resolution was to be 'forwarded to the members of the [General] Assembly who will be likely to advocate the opening of railway communication between East and West Canterbury.'<sup>23</sup> No immediate good came of this ambitious initiative. A shortage of money and technical difficulties prevented the desired objective from being achieved for another thirty years.

Farmers' Clubs, though relatively few in number, performed a multiplicity of functions and were highly respected local bodies. The Kaiapoi Farmers' Club corresponded extensively with similar bodies from other regions on a variety of agricultural matters, pressed agencies of Government for improvements in infrastructure, and organised annual 'Foal' and crop shows. The District Ploughing Match was also conducted under the auspices of the Club, which formally absorbed the Match Committee itself in May 1876. The Ellesmere Farmers' Club was described as 'perhaps the one bright particular star' among the collective organisations in its District, 'being not only a source of much benefit to settlers in general matters, but also the main-spring of all other public undertakings.'<sup>24</sup> Through the part played by their committees in creating such collective institutions, ploughing matches did a great deal to foster the development of agriculture in Canterbury.

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<sup>23</sup> LT, 10 August 1878.

<sup>24</sup> LT, 3 August 1871; 19 June 1875; 10 August 1878, 14 June 1879.



**TABLE 5.1**  
**OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS ELLESMERE PLOUGHING MATCH 1868<sup>25</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	0
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	32
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	10
(b) Semi-skilled	4
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

Being social and sporting events organised within particular Districts defined by clear geographical boundaries, ploughing matches fostered a sense of community at a very localised level. Match day was reportedly one of the few public holidays generally observed in many rural areas and a valuable chance for local farmers to exchange agricultural intelligence and to assess the abilities of a large number of ploughmen while enjoying a festive outing.

The available evidence indicates that male members of most groups within the agrarian community took some part in the organisation or execution of a ploughing match. Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 contain information on forty-six of forty-nine of those involved in some capacity with the Ellesmere District match held in 1868; on thirty-nine of the forty-five individuals who performed some function at the contest which took place at Templeton in 1873; on fifty-two of fifty-four participants in the match conducted at Kaiapoi in 1878.

<sup>25</sup> See Information on Sources in Appendix A. MDB, *passim*; LT and WP, various dates, May – September, 1868.

**TABLE 5.2**  
**OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS TEMPLETON PLOUGHING MATCH 1873<sup>26</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1*
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	0
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	20
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	9
(b) Semi-skilled	8
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*Clergyman

The single largest category of individuals involved in the matches were independent petty rural proprietors. The vast majority of those listed in the tables as skilled or semi-skilled blue collar workers were either the sons of people listed in II(c) or independent contract ploughmen.

**TABLE 5.3**  
**OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS KAIAPOI PLOUGHING MATCH 1878<sup>27</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	0
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	32
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	2
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	15
(b) Semi-skilled	3
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

<sup>26</sup> MDB, *passim*; LT and WP, various dates, May – September, 1873.

<sup>27</sup> MDB, *passim*; LT and WP, various dates, May – September, 1878.

The necessary organisational skills, venues and financial support were provided principally by the enfranchised freeholders, leaseholders and - occasionally - incumbents in public office who constituted the rural 'political' classes. Of particular importance was the considerable energy and self-sacrifice displayed by a relatively small cadre drawn from within the first two categories. These people, wrote one acerbic commentator,

are well aware of the difficulties attendant upon carrying out the details in a satisfactory manner, and more especially the hard, and in many instances, unpleasant work attached to collecting subscriptions. As usual the latter duty devolves upon a few persons who have "their hearts and souls in the work," and who are prepared to surmount any obstacle to complete the undertaking in a creditable manner.<sup>28</sup>

The involvement of politicians in ploughing matches was dictated, to a great extent, by self-interest. Marmaduke Dixon, a Member of the Canterbury Provincial Council for Mandeville between 1865 and 1876, seldom missed an opportunity to make a 'long speech' on some political issue at the dinners which followed the Kaiapoi Ploughing Match. He somewhat ingratiatingly addressed the members at one such gathering in 1870 as 'his brother agriculturalists'. Joseph Beswick, another long-serving Member for Mandeville on the Council, made the telling remark to the same group that 'at all times he [was] happy to meet his constituents.' Combining sarcasm with sanctimoniousness, Beswick said that while Dixon 'had been telling them what he had as a farmer been doing to set them an example,' he 'as a merchant ... would do all he could towards finding them a market for their produce.'<sup>29</sup> Other Members of the Provincial Council, such as F. W. Delamain and W. B. Tosswill at

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<sup>28</sup> LT, 7 August 1874.

<sup>29</sup> LT, 15, 19 July 1875.

Templeton, and A. C. Knight at Lincoln, also maintained a close and protracted involvement with their local ploughing matches.<sup>30</sup>

Ploughing matches attracted considerable numbers of the wider rural population. Many were prepared to endure both the hazards of the primitive system of communications, particularly in outlying areas of the Province, and severe discomfort at the venue. The relatively small assemblage of spectators at the Sefton match in July 1872 'was doubtless caused by the deplorable state of the roads' leading to the arena. Access to the site was primarily 'by what is known as the Terrace Road, and it was almost impassable for vehicles of any description, [being] a perfect quagmire.' Thus, it was 'really a wonder that so many persons visited the match.'<sup>31</sup> An identical situation developed at the Moeraki Downs contest a month later, prompting the reporter for the *Lyttelton Times* to attack 'the local Road Boards' for not having 'taken effective measures some months ago to make it at least passable for heavily laden vehicles.' If they lacked the money to carry out the necessary repairs, they ought ... to apply to the [Provincial] Government for a grant in aid to enable them to keep the main roads in such a state of repair as will not prevent the ordinary traffic from going on.'<sup>32</sup> Some evidence suggests that such appeals bore fruit, and therefore that ploughing matches furthered the construction of community in rural areas by providing an opportunity for residents to agitate for improvements in infrastructure.<sup>33</sup>

Once at a venue, visitors often had to endure for several hours the harsh climatic conditions encountered on the Canterbury Plains between June and September. Ploughing matches, noted one columnist, are generally 'associated with cold unpleasant weather, as of

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<sup>30</sup> WP, 23 July 1870; 29 July 1871; 6, 20 July 1872; LT, 15 July 1869; 9 July 1875; 12 June 1876.

<sup>31</sup> LT, 20 July 1872.

<sup>32</sup> LT, 15 August 1872.

course must be expected during the winter months'. Though many events were blessed with fine weather, others were conducted in bitterly cold south-west gales, rain and sleet. The committee of the Sefton match were 'particularly unfortunate in their fixture' in July 1874. Excepting that held in a 'pelting hail and snow storm' at Moeraki Downs in 1872, 'this year's match [at Sefton] was ushered in by the most severe specimen of Canterbury weather ... experienced in connection with a ploughing match in the North.'<sup>34</sup> That hundreds of people were prepared to attend under such adverse circumstances suggests that ploughing matches may have been important social occasions for the inhabitants of rural Canterbury during this period.

The evidence regarding the actual attendances at matches is chiefly impressionistic, being expressed in such terms as 'large,' 'numerous' or 'excellent'. Attendance at the long-established Kaiapoi match in July 1878 was described as 'fair, about 300 people being on the ground'. The attraction of 'fully 500 persons' to the match held two months later in the recently settled Chertsey District caused the event to be declared a 'very great success'.<sup>35</sup> Making a precise count of the visitors at any ploughing match was virtually impossible. Events were held almost exclusively on private land which, having been loaned to organising committees by altruistic owners, became 'de facto' public spaces to which spectators were not charged admission.

Establishing the composition of 'the gallery' at ploughing matches is only marginally less difficult. Most published reports allude to those attending an event only as 'visitors' or 'the general public'. However, it is certain that the vast majority of spectators were male. An

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<sup>33</sup> LT, 14 August 1873.

<sup>34</sup> LT, 15 August 1872; 23 July 1874; WP, 17 August 1872; 11 July 1874.

<sup>35</sup> LT, 5 July, 13 September 1878.

unusually large crowd gathered to watch the annual contest at Moeraki Downs in August 1873, including 'quite a number of ladies - rather a rare thing at a ploughing match'.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, as might be expected, the available evidence clearly indicates that any audience consisted largely of farmers. Whether this appellation included big landed proprietors, or was restricted principally to small and medium agriculturalists, remains unclear.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the great majority of those interested in ploughing matches appear to have been rural males with a direct economic interest in agriculture.

Although bystanders of both sexes reportedly took a close interest in the ploughing itself, other entertainments were occasionally at hand. 'To enliven the scene' at the Champion match in September 1870, which was conducted in a flooded paddock near the Christchurch Gasworks, there appeared 'a couple of itinerant musicians, who continued to discourse musical selections until the close of the proceedings.'<sup>38</sup> The 'musical family, which one sees on the racecourse, and everywhere in fact, where two or three hundred people are likely to be gathered together' diverted visitors at the Papanui Ploughing Match in July 1877.<sup>39</sup> Spectators, particularly at events in outlying areas of the Province, sometimes created their own amusements by hastily organising informal sporting contests while enduring the lengthy wait which generally occurred while the judges made their decisions. 'The proceedings of the day' at the Port Victoria District match in September 1865 'closed with foot races, in which both men and boys joined, to the amusement of all present.' During the course of another fixture held in the same area two years later, some visitors 'joined in a friendly game at cricket, others in jumping and other sports.' The time occupied by judging was again filled

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<sup>36</sup> LT, 14 August, 5, 31 July 1873.

<sup>37</sup> WP, 19 July 1879.

<sup>38</sup> LT, 14 September 1870.

<sup>39</sup> LT, 4 July 1877.

with 'running matches' organised for men and boys.<sup>40</sup> However, such wholesome pastimes frequently proved insufficient to hold the interest of spectators for an entire day.

From 1870 ploughing matches began to attract itinerant operators of 'games of chance'. Operators of the "noble" English game of Aunt Sally and Doodlembucks' were present at the Champion match in 1870, and both amusements were in evidence at other tournaments in Canterbury throughout the decade.<sup>41</sup> Other more serious forms of gambling soon appeared. 'A peripatetic proprietor of a table devoted to the illusive game of over and under seven pitched his tent near the hotel booth' at the Lincoln Ploughing Match in July 1871. However, a reporter observed priggishly that 'to the credit of the merrie men of Lincoln it must be said that the table was very little patronised.' The roaming croupier tried again at the Malvern match a month later, 'but, as if doubtful of the sporting proclivities of the settlers ... had fortified himself with a supply of crayfish'! Such misgivings proved justified, for the crustaceans 'were in greater favour than the table.' He 'strenuously endeavoured to drive a trade' at the Moeraki Downs event six weeks later, but with similarly disappointing results.<sup>42</sup>

It is difficult to determine whether gambling at ploughing matches developed far beyond such unpromising beginnings. There are relatively few explicit references to the presence of games of chance, other than the "Aunt Sally." This absence might suggest that only in isolated instances, such as at the match at Papanui in July 1877, were 'there were one or two games of chance, which had been well placed by their enterprising owners, who did a

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<sup>40</sup> LT, 11 September 1865; 28 September 1867; 29 August 1868.

<sup>41</sup> LT, 2, 11 September 1871.

<sup>42</sup> LT, 5 July, 11, 14 August 1873.

roaring trade.’<sup>43</sup> However, the comment that ‘the itinerant sporting community from Christchurch ... are normally inseparable from meetings of this description’<sup>44</sup> suggests a presence so taken for granted that it did not warrant special mention.

Whatever the gambling habits of those attending ploughing matches, they certainly consumed alcohol in substantial quantities. Refreshments at the earliest events were provided for both visitors and participants by the owners of the land on which they took place. However, ‘trials of skill with the plough’ in Canterbury were characterised almost from their inception by an intimate involvement with hotels and publicans. From the mid-1850s public houses accommodated the meetings at which contests were organised, served as aggregation points for subscriptions and entries, and provided the dinners which were increasingly considered a central element of any event. By 1861 publicans had intensified their involvement to include the provision of booths on ground for the sale of comestibles and alcoholic beverages, and the donation of lavish prizes such as silver cups valued at £10 10s. Within five years the innkeeper had become a mainstay of ploughing matches throughout the Province.<sup>45</sup>

Spectators usually partook freely of the ‘potables’ offered for sale at the publican’s booth. The result at the South Sefton match in September 1867 was drunken disorder exacerbated, thought one contemporary, by ‘the absence of the police’ from the venue. ‘On an occasion like this,’ wrote one observer, ‘people meet friends, and pledge each other in such liquors as are to be obtained, until, in many cases, they become elated, and finally noisy.’ Due to the constabulary not being present in this instance, there was

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<sup>43</sup> LT, 4 July 1877.

<sup>44</sup> LT, 24 July 1874.

<sup>45</sup> LT, 1 September 1855; 8 September 1858; 22 June 1859; *Press*, 24 August 1861; 22 August, 2 September 1863; 13 August 1864; WP, 15 September 1866; 24 August 1867.



much noise and sundry scrambles, which, but for the interference of the more rational [members] of the public, would have become fights took place, detracting much from the success of the meeting, and in many cases so disturbing the teams and attention of the ploughmen as to be in a measure the cause of inferior work.<sup>46</sup>

‘The police were sent for several times,’ complained the correspondent, ‘but either from being away on duty or not, we do not know, but they certainly never appeared on the scene.’<sup>47</sup> The problem persisted to a minor extent, despite the appointment of small numbers of police to almost every match held thereafter.

At the Ellesmere contest in August 1869 some of the crowd ‘became so much excited that their feelings got the better of their discretion.’ A few ‘jovial souls’ stripped to their shirtsleeves and engaged in a drunken brawl, ‘but in almost every case the arms were stronger than the legs, and before night many valiant pugilists lay soundly sleeping on the ground.’<sup>48</sup> Responsibility for this fiasco rested largely with J. J. Loe, who had operated the refreshment booth at the venue. A commentator noted acidly that there ‘is plenty of water about Leeston, but mine host appears more innocent of its use than many of his brother publicans.’<sup>49</sup> The event at Ellesmere remained notable into the early 1870s for the number of ‘recumbent figures to be observed’ and the ‘erratic course of progress followed’ by many others. However, this situation appears to have persisted only while the sale of liquor remained in the hands of publican Loe.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> LT, 19 September 1867.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> LT, 7 August 1869.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> LT, 3 August 1871; 24 July 1872.

Ploughing matches began to acquire an unsavoury reputation for the intoxication of their spectators. 'As a rule,' declaimed the *Lyttelton Times*, 'these agricultural gatherings are characterised by a spirit of reckless *abandon* to the allurements of so-called "refreshers," which more or less results in disorderly conduct'.<sup>51</sup> [italics in original.] The evidence presented above underlines the point made by both Fairburn and Phillips regarding 'the importance of drink in establishing ... communal bonds among men' and the tendency of the associated revelry to degenerate into unpleasantness and violence.<sup>52</sup> One correspondent advanced the dubious hypothesis that spectators indulged in heavy drinking and fighting 'not through ill-nature, but more to warm themselves ... in the blowing, snow, and hail'<sup>53</sup>

Whatever their origin, outbreaks of drunken violence at ploughing matches were relatively few in number and, for a variety of reasons, rapidly disappeared during the 1870s. Policing became more effective with sometimes two or more members of the force being routinely stationed at every venue. One observer perceived a direct link between the presence of police and the diminution of 'disorderly conduct' arising from the consumption of alcohol. He noted that 'as a policeman was present there was less squabbling than we have ever seen, which, considering the coldness of the weather that made spirits the popular beverage, certainly speaks well for Lincoln.'<sup>54</sup> The duties of police officers at matches in all parts of Canterbury were repeatedly described throughout the decade as a 'sinecure'.<sup>55</sup> Improved behaviour at ploughing matches may also have been a reflection of the general simultaneous declines identified by Fairburn in the rates per capita of spirits consumed and convictions for

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<sup>51</sup> LT, 26 August 1872.

<sup>52</sup> J. O. C. Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History*, Second Edition, Penguin Books, Auckland, 1997, pp.34-7; M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society, 1850-1900*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1989, pp.195-204, 213-4; *Census of New Zealand*, 1874, pp.37-50 *passim*.

<sup>53</sup> LT, 26 August 1872.

<sup>54</sup> WP, 5 July 1873.

<sup>55</sup> WP, 4, 11 July 1873; 15 August 1874; 25 June, 22 July 1875; 5 August 1876; 30 June, 7 July 1877.

violent offending. Witnesses frequently reported that the consumption of spirits remained high but that unruly behaviour was minimal or absent.<sup>56</sup> Of direct relevance was the manner in which the vast majority of publicans conducted their operations during the 1870s. It became standard practice to dilute the spirits purveyed with water and to make available a substantial luncheon.<sup>57</sup>

For a few publicans it was a matter of vital self-interest that their actions not be responsible for any disorderly behaviour at a match. Landlords William Burnip of Kaiapoi and James Wild of Papanui for many years won the concessions to operate the 'refreshment booths' at the matches in their respective Districts and to host the dinners held afterwards. By the early 1870s Burnip had become a respected member of the community and a pillar of aquatic sports in Kaiapoi. Of James Wild it was once written that he 'appears to exercise a prescriptive right as caterer to the Papanui Ploughing Matches.'<sup>58</sup> He probably derived such a privilege through his enduring membership of the committee which organised the event. In order to protect their social standing and access to the profitable activity of catering to sporting events held in their areas, it was necessary for both publicans to avoid any action which might cause drunken misbehaviour among spectators at ploughing matches. Indeed Burnip and Wild, in common with most other hoteliers operating similar booths, attempted to reduce the possibility of drunkenness at these events by offering a substantial luncheon to patrons for the modest sum of 1s. Thus while the consumption of alcohol in copious amounts by spectators remained a distinguishing characteristic of ploughing matches, the incidence of drunkenness and violence declined rapidly from about 1870.

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<sup>56</sup> WP, 23 August 1873; 4, 25 July 1874; 7 August 1875; 5 August 1876; 14 July 1877.

<sup>57</sup> WP, 29 June, 7 September 1872; 5, 12 July 1873; 25 July, 8 August 1874; 8 July 1876; 7 July 1877.

<sup>58</sup> WP, 6 July 1878.

Competitors also frequently imbibed alcoholic beverages, though usually in the form of ale which supplemented a substantial lunch provided by the owner of the venue. However, it is unlikely that any contestant could afford to become intoxicated, given the considerable material importance to many ploughmen of success at ploughing matches. Winning a prize could add between £1 10s and £10 to a married farm labourer's annual wage of £40 to £60. From the mid-1860s District matches were typically divided into champions', men's first and second, boys', double- or even triple-furrow, wheel and swing classes. Prize money was offered to the most successful competitors in each class and on a declining scale through the classes from highest to lowest. At the Lincoln Ploughing Match in June 1872 prizes ranged in value from £7 10s to £1 in the First class, £6 to £1 in the Second, £3 to 10s in the Boys' and £6 to £1 in the Double-furrow class. Four awards were made in each of the first three categories and three in the last.<sup>59</sup> Prizes in the form of commodities, ranging from sets of harness to whipple trees, were also offered at every event. Although the rules of most matches restricted particularly successful competitors to the champion class, the great majority could participate in whichever category they believed suitable for their level of skill.

Bitter controversies raged intermittently during 1872 and 1873 over the extent to which farmers and their sons and what might be termed 'skilled agricultural proletarians' dominated competition, and whether the former category were 'advantaged' in competition and the latter 'disadvantaged'. In July 1872, PLOUGHMAN wrote that at almost every match 'of these last few years, nearly all of the first prize-takers have been farmers and farmers' sons'. These men, he maintained,

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<sup>59</sup> LT, 13 July 1872.

are their own masters and can afford to spend any amount of time in practice, and having their ploughs fitted for the especial work to be done. This advantage is not enjoyed by the farm servant, as few masters will allow them the time to practice, and the expenses of altering and re-altering their ploughs to the exact shape required.<sup>60</sup>

The Provincial Champion matches, in particular, had become 'a farce, the prizes being divided between a few, who may be said to almost make a trade of it'. This situation was much to the detriment of the farm labourer, who had 'no chance of competing with them, and who it is certainly one great aim and end to improve.' PLOUGHMAN did not wish to 'exclude these enterprising young [champions] who are, for the most part, Canterbury educated, and are a credit to our agriculture'. Instead he suggested that either 'farmers and farmers' sons should have a class to themselves ... or that there should be one class open to all comers in New Zealand and another open only to ploughmen receiving wages.' Such a division 'would give a huge class of good workmen a chance of competing with each other on equal terms.'<sup>61</sup> An increasing number of people connected with ploughing matches in Canterbury began to agree with the sentiments expressed by PLOUGHMAN.

These criticisms were not entirely exaggerated. An examination of results from matches held throughout Canterbury shows clearly that 'farmers and farmers' sons' won the majority of prizes at almost every event.<sup>62</sup> At the nine contests held in 1868, competitors from these backgrounds won fifteen of twenty-three prizes offered. The proportion had declined slightly by 1872, when they obtained thirty-one of the fifty prizes awarded at the fourteen matches organised during that season. However, the predominance of farmers and

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<sup>60</sup> WP, 27 July 1872.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> LT, 25 July, 1 August, 17 September 1868; 17 July, 16 August 1869; 22 July, 16 August, (Supplement) 28 September 1870; WP, 8, 29 July, 2 September 1871; 13, 27 July, 7 September 1872.

their sons was virtually complete by 1876, when they took eighteen of the twenty-two prizes available in the five principal events held that year.<sup>63</sup>

The issues raised above were of some importance, for the matter of 'improvement' weighed heavily on the minds of many immigrants in the Province. One of 'the unemployed working men of Canterbury' wrote to the *Lyttelton Times* in 1867 that men such as himself 'did not come out here merely to earn a living; they could do that at home.' Rather, their 'aim and object in coming was to secure in a few years, by frugality and industry, a small independence.'<sup>64</sup> Ploughing matches possessed a significance in this context beyond the cash prizes offered to the victors. The actions of each competitor were watched closely by knowledgeable audiences of agriculturalists and reported in minute detail in the local newspapers. While praise was lavished on any ploughmen whose work deserved it, correspondents did not fail to 'speak critically of the ploughing'.<sup>65</sup> A fairly typical report contained the damning verdict that 'J. Risely's line was as crooked as a dog's hind leg, whilst his fiering was wretched, his general work very ragged, and his finish frightful.'<sup>66</sup> Although this assessment obviously did nothing to enhance Risely's reputation in the colony as a ploughman, the creditable performances of men too intimidated to enter against 'cracks' would not be seen by or reported to prospective employers. PLOUGHMAN evidently considered that skilled agricultural proletarians had to be offered a reasonable chance of success if they were to be induced to enter, if only for the notice which would be taken of their efforts.

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<sup>63</sup> LT, various dates, June-Sept. 1868, June-Sept. 1872, June-Sept. 1876.

<sup>64</sup> LT, 24 July 1867.

<sup>65</sup> LT, 13 July, June 1872.

The vigorous debate on the subject of excluding 'enterprising young champions' which occurred during 1873 was significant for the clarity with which it revealed the connection inherent in ploughing matches between sport and work. The arguments advanced in favour of excluding 'cracks' primarily emphasised the deleterious consequences for the 'game' of their unsportsmanlike behaviour. A member of the Lincoln match Committee used an example drawn from Victoria to illustrate his contention that the situation described by PLOUGHMAN had deteriorated still further during the intervening year. The prizes offered at many District matches had, he believed, been sufficiently valuable 'to induce crack ploughmen, with specially got up implements, to travel from one match to another for the sake of securing the money'. This 'system' exerted a 'pernicious influence' because it deterred local ploughmen from 'entering for the champion prize, and thereby destroys their interest in the ploughing match'. Moreover, repeated success generated 'a wandering restless disposition in those who have acquired sufficient skill to stand a chance of ... winning the money.' The member proposed as an 'antidote' that 'the local matches be strictly local,' with a 'national champion match' to be held following the completion of all District events. Only if this action was taken would 'the interest in ploughing matches, and the spirit of emulation, which, under the present system, are likely to die out ... be kept alive.'<sup>67</sup> Thus, only through the exclusion of these mercenaries could ploughing survive as a sporting activity.

PLOUGHMAN re-entered the fray with a scathing attack on the personal integrity of all 'cracks'. 'What honour can it be,' he asked, 'for a ... champion ... to go poking about to every little district match trying to take away all money he can get hold of?' Did these men 'go in for honour' or 'care for a medal or a cup?' The answer was

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<sup>66</sup> LT, 29 August 1872.

No; a few shillings ready money or a plough, or even a pair of whippetrees, that they can sell, would be far preferable. Why, I heard of one champion, who was present at the [Templeton] meeting - a man they say, who attended all the matches last year, and made a lot of money - [who] when he heard he was to be excluded, actually refused to contribute anything towards the match, although he had taken the district money year after year, and had brothers coming on. So much for the honour of being a champion.<sup>68</sup>

Plainly he considered that the champion ploughmen were motivated solely by greed and therefore deserved to be excluded from all local competition except that held in the Districts in which they resided.

Nevertheless, a considerable body of opinion thought this insufficient reason to exclude 'cracks' from general competition. Opponents of such a policy highlighted inconsistencies in the argument for ostracising them, and cited the benefits for agricultural development in Canterbury of their participation in parochial events. Though not actually a farmer, CHIPS was 'considerably mixed up with agriculturalists' and had heard at length both sides of the debate.<sup>69</sup> He believed that the distinction drawn between the champions and their local counterparts was exaggerated. If a man 'takes an engagement as a ploughman, he "professes" to be a ploughman and "trades" on his ability as such.' Consequently, therefore, 'district ploughmen are "professional men" who "make a trade of it," for, at least, nine months out of the twelve ... from the conclusion of the champion match until the ... district matches [come] round again.' Any farmer asking his ploughman to perform menial farm labour allegedly met with the response that "'I engaged with you as a ploughman, and I'll do my work; but, I'll be wood and water joey for no man.'" However, should a meeting be called at 'the Clodhoppers' Arms' to arrange the 'annual district ploughing match, it is

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<sup>67</sup> LT, 12 July 1873.

<sup>68</sup> LT, 19 July 1873.



astonishing how quick 'John' will take off his frills, and, forgetting all about his engagement ... talk about the unfairness of admitting "professional men" to the district match.' CHIPS acknowledged that most farmers could 'afford neither the time, nor the blacksmiths' bills to enable their ploughmen to compete with the scientific men.' Nevertheless, because the latter were 'experimentalising' for farmers generally, 'a special class, with substantial prizes' should be created at every district match in which 'cracks' alone could compete. Entry to all other classes could be restricted to men from the District, who could then 'compete among themselves' while having the opportunity to see 'the style ... and the method of handling the tools of men who "make a trade of it."' 'If the object of a ploughing be simply a social gathering,' wrote CHIPS, 'of course, these remarks would not apply; but, if they are intended for the improvement of ploughing, I cannot see how the object is to be attained by the exclusion of the best men of the province.'<sup>70</sup> The great majority of organisers agreed, if not with CHIPS's assessment of the status of local ploughmen, then certainly with his proposals for the restructuring of the matches themselves.

Thenceforth the tendency which had existed at a few District contests from the 1860s, particularly at Lincoln and Ellesmere, towards discrimination against 'non-residents' became general. For example, the Templeton match had been open to all comers in 1868, though from 1870 competitors from outside the district were required to pay an entry fee twice that demanded of 'residents'. However, in 1873 entry to all classes except the relatively neglected Double Furrow was 'confined to the District,' and all 'cracks' were effectively 'excluded for ever' from entering any class.<sup>71</sup> Restrictions on non-residents were rapidly introduced at other events. The committee at Rangiora, in the manner of its counterpart at Templeton, imposed

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<sup>69</sup> LT, 23 July 1873.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid*

<sup>71</sup> LT, 16 July 1868; 2 July 1870; 16 July, 22 August 1873.

an entry fee on 'teams owned south of the Waimakariri' which was double that payable by teams 'owned in the Northern district.'<sup>72</sup> The organisers of the Ellesmere match reiterated their 'staunchly protectionist' position by insisting that 'all teams [entered] shall be the property of persons holding land in the Ellesmere Road Board district'.<sup>73</sup> Only 'Ploughmen of the District' could take part in the contests at Ashburton, Courtenay and Malvern. The event at Moeraki Downs was open only to competitors from Cust, Oxford and West Eyreton who had not won more than two prizes at any other match in Canterbury.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the organisers of eight out of the thirteen ploughing matches held in the Province during 1873 sought by some means to exclude 'cracks' and 'outsiders' from their lists.

Throughout the remainder of the decade some committees, particularly those responsible for the contests at Ashburton, Lincoln, Papanui, Sefton, and South Rakaia, vacillated between imposing some sort of restrictions on successful 'non-residents' and declaring their events open to all comers. The administrators of the matches at Lincoln and South Rakaia and a few small ephemeral fixtures adopted the measure proposed by CHIPS and confined outsiders to specially created 'Champion' or First classes. However, until the virtual demise of the sport in 1880, sentiment in the majority of Districts was against admitting 'non-residents' and only the contest at Kaiapoi consistently remained open to all comers in every class. Significantly, the exclusion of itinerant 'cracks' from local matches did nothing to promote the objective desired by PLOUGHMAN and his supporters. Evidence from the Lincoln, Eyreton, Courtenay and Ashburton events shows that the absence of 'cracks' from outside a particular District simply enabled farmers and farmers' sons from

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<sup>72</sup> LT, 27 June 1873.

<sup>73</sup> LT, 10 July 1873.

<sup>74</sup> LT, 24 July, 2, 9 August 1873.

within the locality to achieve a stranglehold on competition.<sup>75</sup> The opportunities for successful competitors from each locality to enter tournaments in other precincts of Canterbury were thus severely limited. Hence, the utility of ploughing matches as a means of disseminating information on agricultural techniques and technology throughout the Province by becoming a medium for competition between the various Districts was reduced, while their capacity for serving such purposes within each District was enhanced.

The foundations of the ploughing match were gradually undermined during the 1870s by the fluctuating economy of Canterbury even though the number of acres under cultivation continued to grow. The sport suffered a temporary lapse of popularity among farmers coincidental with the onset of the wheat boom during 1873. By the end of 1874 over 70,000 acres of Canterbury were under wheat, and within two more years approximately 500,000 acres had been ploughed and sown with grass and a wide variety of root and grain crops. Included in this total was a large area of the Province south of the Rakaia, which had been opened to intensive cultivation with the extension of the railway bridge over the river in June 1873 and the extension of the line to Ashburton in August 1874.<sup>76</sup> A substantial number of farmers who had previously been enthusiastic supporters of their local ploughing contests evidently

purchased waste lands a considerable distance from their old farms, which are now being devoted more to grazing purposes than hitherto, while their sons and some of the ploughmen are sent to cultivate the new sections, thus being too far away and too busy breaking up to take part in ploughing matches.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> LT, 3, 18, 30 July 1874; 2, 30 August 1875; 11, 18 August 1877.

<sup>76</sup> Scotter, *History of Canterbury, II*, pp.308-10.

<sup>77</sup> LT, 5 July 1873.

During 1873 and 1874 the contests at Templeton, Lincoln, Rangiora, Malvern, Moeraki Downs, Selwyn, Courtenay, Eyreton, South Rakaia and even Ashburton experienced a scarcity of both competitors and subscriptions.<sup>78</sup>

According to some critics this situation was exacerbated by the overabundance of matches, which had 'become so numerous as to cause serious inconvenience to many farmers.' One commentator wrote that

If ... a man is successful at one match, he begs permission to attend another, and so on, until the loss of men's time and the absence of teams becomes a serious loss to those who having good men cannot afford to quarrel with them, and are constrained to give their consent.<sup>79</sup>

Observers repeatedly counselled that several Districts in each region of the Province should amalgamate with the objective of reducing the number, and therefore improving the quality, of matches.<sup>80</sup> Such appeals were largely ignored and District contests continued to be organised on the established pattern. However, they gradually declined in number from a peak of sixteen in 1872, initially to ten during 1874 and 1875, and finally to a core of seven between 1876 and 1878. This decline accelerated to become almost total collapse with the sudden onset of the Long Depression in January 1879. A mere three matches were held that season, at Sefton and Amberley, Papanui and Kaiapoi. Of these only the last two survived, though in a reasonably healthy state, in 1880.

The ruminations of one columnist on the demise of ploughing matches revealed their true significance for a considerable proportion of the rural population of Canterbury. He

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<sup>78</sup> LT, 4, 5 July, 2, 6, 11, 14, 22 August 1873; 3, 18, 30 July, 6, 8, 12 August 1874; WP, 16 August 1873; 4, 25 July, 8, 15 August 1874.

<sup>79</sup> LT, 1 July 1873.

stated, probably without undue exaggeration, that 'In former years these annual gatherings were amongst the most enthusiastically supported "institutions" in the country.' The local contest was

looked forward to with the greatest interest and pleasure for months beforehand, and the comparative merits and chances of well-known competitors were duly weighed in the balance, and accorded almost as much grave consideration as the probabilities of a general election. The breasts of youthful and aspiring ploughmen glowed with a laudable ambition to distinguish themselves at local matches, while the more experienced were incited to further efforts by the crowning honours of the championship.<sup>81</sup>

Although ploughing matches 'have not died out altogether ... in most districts their existence is ... precarious'.<sup>82</sup> Because of 'an apathetic feeling in regard to these matches, and, possibly, the present commercial depression affecting all classes of the community,' the committees at both Papanui and Kaiapoi experienced great difficulty in collecting subscriptions.<sup>83</sup>

The scribe wondered whether the trouble was 'entirely owing to the depression which has overtaken agriculture, or is it only the natural reaction following what almost amounted to a mania for ploughing matches in by-gone seasons'? Perhaps it had transpired that 'the expenditure of time and labour gave no corresponding practical results.' Whatever the cause, it seemed certain that 'no great revival in ploughing matches is to be looked for, till wheat pays for growing and oats become a marketable commodity'.<sup>84</sup> Such a gloomy assessment was apparently justified. Between 1882 and 1890 the price of wool exported to London fell

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<sup>80</sup> LT, 3, 18, 30 July 1874; WP, 25 July 1874.

<sup>81</sup> LT, 10 July 1880.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid*

<sup>83</sup> LT, 22 July, 4 September 1880.

<sup>84</sup> LT, 10 July 1880.

from 10 3/4d to 6 3/4d per pound, and that of wheat per bushel from 4s to 2s 6d.<sup>85</sup> Even if prices had recovered the fear remained 'that the frequent appearance of the [Property] tax-gatherer will tell sadly against the subscription list'. 'The amount due on the national "dead horse"', the writer glumly concluded, 'will effectually absorb whatever surplus cash the agricultural population may by chance find in their possession.'<sup>86</sup> It was abundantly clear to this particular observer that the economic crisis engulfing Canterbury was of sufficient magnitude to effectively destroy the ploughing match for the foreseeable future. Competition during any year between 1880 and 1890 apparently amounted to no more than three or four events organised randomly at scattered locations around the Province.

Thus, the advent of two decades of economic stagnation virtually eliminated one of the most important institutions in the life of rural Canterbury. Ploughing matches had functioned in several ways to encourage the growth of a community which embraced all agrarian classes. They served as venues for the development of the new techniques and technologies required to ensure the success of arable farming in Canterbury. Furthermore, the committees which organised these matches periodically provided the impetus for other community initiatives of an agricultural nature, particularly Farmers' Clubs. The evidence drawn from the Kaiapoi and Ellesmere Districts demonstrates that the Clubs served their local farming populations well as forums for social interaction, the exchange of useful intelligence and the organisation of activities related to agriculture. Ultimately, perhaps, it was in their role as social and sporting events firmly located within a particular District, and in which all classes of the rural population were involved, that ploughing matches were most effective in fostering a sense of community. Some degree of tension between classes did exist, as demonstrated by the antagonism which erupted during the early 1870s over the

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<sup>85</sup> C. G. F. Simkin, *The Instability of a Dependent Economy: Economic Fluctuations in New Zealand, 1840-1914*, Oxford

dominance of competition by relatively small élite groups. However, these grievances were not articulated in terms of the hostility of one class against another, but as the discontent of the 'disadvantaged' competitor against his 'advantaged' opponent. Any real animosity appears to have subsided fairly quickly, leaving the ploughing match as an institution slightly altered but essentially unharmed.

The greatest threat to the sport was the fluctuating economic situation which prevailed in Canterbury during the 1870s. During the good times of the 'land boom' from 1873 to 1878 many of the farmers, their sons and the ploughmen on whom the success of any match depended were heavily occupied with 'breaking up' newly acquired properties. The advent of the Long Depression in 1879 brought a collapse in the prices paid for agricultural exports. One consequence of this turn of events was a reduction in the amount of money available to finance ploughing matches. Events were organised sporadically throughout the Province after 1880, but not until the mid-1890s did conditions improve sufficiently to allow the ploughing match to become once again a significant institution in rural Canterbury.<sup>87</sup> How ironic that at the moment when ploughing matches, so closely related to the intense rural labour which produced much of the wealth of the Province entered a prolonged period of decline, the sport most symbolic of élite abundant leisure, cricket, began to flourish in the urban environment.

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University Press, London, 1951, pp.165, 167.

<sup>86</sup> LT, 10 July 1880.

<sup>87</sup> Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III*, pp.224-5; V. Wood and T. Brooking, 'Canterbury Farming Intensifies', in G. Cant and R. Kirkpatrick, eds, *Rural Canterbury: Celebrating its History*, Daphne Brasell Associates Ltd and Lincoln University Press, 2001, p.98.

# ***THE NOBLE AND TRULY ENGLISH GAME***



***CRICKE AND CLASS IN  
CANTERBURY, 1850-1890***



## CHAPTER 6

### *'THE NOBLE AND TRULY ENGLISH GAME'<sup>1</sup>: CRICKET AND CLASS IN CANTERBURY, 1850-1890*

'Until at least the mid-1890s', writes Greg Ryan, 'cricket was the 'national' game' of New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> By 1851 cricket had obtained at least a foothold in almost every major centre of European population in New Zealand. In his Doctoral thesis, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', and in his subsequent writings Ryan has argued that cricket in the colony was dominated by the elite during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Ryan, the principal academic historian of cricket in New Zealand, convincingly argues that because it was 'an essential institution' of the 'leisured class' in England, cricket controlled by the elite in the new settlement 'emerged early and naturally when one might normally expect other amenities and causes to have taken priority.' This situation developed because all of the principal settlements other than Auckland were constructed in accordance with the Wakefield ideal, which mandated the reproduction of the rigidly hierarchical social structure of eighteenth-century rural England in a colonial environment. The members of the élites who controlled cricket throughout New Zealand between 1850 and 1890 'subscribed to a conventional English form and conception'<sup>4</sup> of the game. However, cricket in Canterbury differed in many respects from that which evolved simultaneously in England, the Australian colonies and even the other provinces of New Zealand.

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<sup>1</sup> LT, 16 December, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> G. Ryan, 'New Zealand', in B. Stoddart and K. Sandiford, eds, *The Imperial Game: Cricket, Culture and Society*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1998, p.93.

<sup>3</sup> G. Ryan, 'Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps: The Making of New Zealand Cricket, 1832-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996, pp.10-11.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.94-7.

Victorian Englishmen inherited cricket from their Georgian forebears, and transformed it from a game played 'for fun' into a means of inducing 'spiritual and mental regeneration.' Cricket provided large numbers of people with both exercise and entertainment, thus serving as a form of release from the tedium of manual labour. 'From county field to village green', writes Bruce Haley, 'its popularity as a game to be played or watched was unrivalled' during the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> The most prominent symbol of the devotion of the Victorians to the game was the County Championship, which was instituted in 1873. However, Sandiford believes that the 'full social importance of the game' is demonstrated by the 'real hold' which it obtained in 'English villages', wherein 'the cricket ground and its lovingly tended pitch ranked in symbolic importance with the pub and the church.'<sup>6</sup>

The number of spectators at County matches averaged about four thousand throughout the 1860s. With the advent of W. G. Grace and several other colourful players, crowds attending County matches in urban centres doubled in size during the 1870s and attendances exceeding ten thousand each day became common after 1880. By the early 1890s a particularly popular fixture could draw more than twenty thousand spectators per day. Crowds at all levels of cricket in the southern counties of England apparently consisted primarily of the upper and middle classes, while those in the north contained a greater number of working class supporters. Though attendances at club matches are more difficult to ascertain, available evidence suggests that by 1890 they regularly attracted audiences of between two thousand and six thousand.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> B. Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1978, p.125.

<sup>6</sup> K. Sandiford, 'England', in B. Stoddart and K. Sandiford, eds, *The Imperial Game: Cricket, Culture and Society*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1998, p.10.

<sup>7</sup> K. Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians*, Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1994, pp.112, 119-20, 123-5.

Despite the steady growth in interest among the general public, the financial returns from cricket were minimal. The number of paying spectators did not increase sufficiently to compensate for the millions of pounds which were spent on facilities and equipment. Consequently, many County clubs were saved from collapse only by the benevolence of wealthy patrons drawn from among the Nobility or the local bourgeoisie. County cricket clubs remained in dire financial straits primarily because of the 'dogged refusal' of administrators to either make the game more attractive by 'modernizing' it or to emulate the leading soccer clubs in England by selling the game 'aggressively' to the working classes. Thus, cricket remained primarily an activity for participants, rather than for paying spectators. However, gate money was a secondary consideration for those administering the game, who considered cricket to be 'a valued resource in the ordering and training of the nation to be supported, not exploited, economically.'<sup>8</sup>

The 'social centrality' of the game in Victorian England was 'fostered, nurtured and maintained' by key institutions and social groups. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert provided 'symbolically significant' support for cricket by encouraging their sons to play and serving as patrons of a number of clubs. Both Albert and the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, became patrons of the M.C.C. Such endorsement was important during an era in which aristocrats and commoners alike 'followed the guidance of the monarchy in matters cultural.' The support of the 'ruling cultural elite', which included the Nobility, the landed gentry and the upper middle classes, also proved 'critical' in securing the 'social triumph' of cricket in England and ensured its enthusiastic adoption throughout the country.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Sandiford, 'England', p.24.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, pp.11-12.

The 'reverence for and faith in' the game among the social and political élites was cultivated by the leading educational and religious institutions in England. Many educators, including G. E. L. Cotton at Marlborough and E. W. Benson at Wellington College, were convinced that team games possessed an inherent moral value which made them essential for the formation and development of 'character'. Through the vigorous action of headmasters anxious to cultivate 'dash', 'pluck' and fortitude within each of their charges, cricket had become firmly established throughout the network of public schools in England by the early 1860s.<sup>10</sup> Many of the old boys of these institutions took the game and its associated system of values to the universities, particularly Oxford and Cambridge, where the connection between cricketing skills and the production of appropriate social behaviour was 'perhaps even more important.'<sup>11</sup>

The educationalists were directly supported in their proselytising endeavours by the Church of England. Many Anglican clergy were themselves academics and schoolmasters, and ardent advocates for what became known from the 1850s as 'Muscular Christianity'.<sup>12</sup> 'Physical frailty', notes Sandiford, was posited as 'unnatural because it was a manifestation of moral and spiritual inadequacy which could be overcome by prayer, upright living, discipline and exercise.' The chivalrous Medieval knight was transformed in the minds of the Victorian upper and middle classes into the muscular Christian cricketer, or more accurately, the muscular Christian batsman. Bowling still bore the stigma of being an activity conducted

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<sup>10</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989, pp.5, 89-90, 98; Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, pp.161-3.

<sup>11</sup> Sandiford, 'England', p.16.

<sup>12</sup> Central to this doctrine, propagated most eloquently by Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown's School Days* and by Charles Kingsley in a number of publications, was the belief that good physical health was essential if an individual was to live in accordance with the will of God. The state of the soul, wrote Kingsley, often depends on that of the body. The body, the mind and the soul should function in complete harmony so that the human being might be open to divine inspiration; Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, pp.107-19.

by paid labourers. The footballer was considered an inappropriate model because he engaged in a sport with 'too many emotional excesses.'<sup>13</sup>

The élites perceived the usefulness of cricket as a 'social instrument' for controlling the behaviour of the working classes, who might otherwise expend in the public house the increasing amounts of leisure time which they enjoyed after 1850. Cricket was widely considered by the élites to be the most desirable of sports, because it would serve both to improve the physical and mental health of the proletariat and to act as 'a healing bond between the classes.'<sup>14</sup> One commentator wrote during the 1850s that cricket provided 'a happy and compendious illustration of English characteristics and English social institutions ... the truly English republican element of a mixture of classes with the right man in the right place.'<sup>15</sup>

However, the concept of 'cricketing egalitarianism' proved to be illusory, for the game did not become a means of eliminating barriers between the classes. 'Despite all their rhetoric about 'unchristian segregation'', notes Sandiford,

the Victorian elite remained conscious of their class and determined to protect their status, that all-important badge of 'respectability'. Consequently, the separation of the classes was deliberately preserved at [almost] all levels of the game.<sup>16</sup>

Only in village cricket did any extensive fraternisation occur between the classes, and this was limited to the field of play. The urban élites generally kept their 'social inferiors' at a

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<sup>13</sup> Sandiford, 'England', p.19, *Cricket and the Victorians*, p.36.

<sup>14</sup> Sandiford, 'England,' pp.20-3.

<sup>15</sup> G. J. Cayley, *The Working Classes: Their Interest in Reform*, [?], London, 1858, n.p., in P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1987, p.137.

<sup>16</sup> Sandiford, 'England', pp.22-3.

distance, most notably by establishing socially exclusive clubs. Thus, working class cricketers were ostracised from 'bourgeois and aristocratic' teams and effectively restricted to playing among themselves.

Thus, cricket in Victorian England was principally 'a product of the ruling elite which dominated its growth.' Rhetorical flourishes on the egalitarianism of cricket notwithstanding, the game tended to broaden, rather than narrow, the gaps which existed between the classes. Moreover, cricket was an activity driven by philosophical rather than economic considerations, in which emphasis was placed upon 'symbolic models rather than realistic ones.' The cultural and political élites revered cricket and nurtured it assiduously in the belief that, 'like the Church and the Crown', it was an institution which had 'vital and specific functions to perform' in English life.<sup>17</sup>

Cricket attained the same measure of significance throughout the Australian colonies during the Victorian era, though for reasons other than those which had secured its social primacy in England. Moreover, the game itself differed significantly in many respects from that which evolved 'at Home'. Cricket, 'the first team game' to be imported into Australia, rapidly achieved a wide 'geographical spread' and became 'equally strong in city and country, and in the various colonies.' The game was fostered by enthusiastic colonists for a number of reasons. The first was the same simple 'love of English sports' in general which prompted the development of thoroughbred racing, athletics, boxing and rowing. The second stimulus was a more widespread nostalgia for the familiar surroundings of England. Vigorous efforts were made at various Colonial grounds to replicate, by use of such paraphernalia as English trees, the physical environment in which the game was played. A further motivation

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<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, pp.28-9.

for the establishment of cricket was to prove, initially to the satisfaction of the settlers themselves and later to the inhabitants of the Mother Country, that 'English culture' and 'British stock' could 'flourish in an alien environment.'<sup>18</sup>

Despite the fact that the game was played under identical rules at Home and in the Colonies, the 'social configuration' of cricket in Australia differed markedly from that of its English counterpart. A wide variety of clubs had been established by 1870. Most were based on particular suburbs, voluntary associations, schools, universities, segments of the civil service, occupational groups or places of work. Richard Cashman writes that Australian cricket was, from its inception, 'far more egalitarian'. Though the classes did not always mix within clubs, they certainly did so in the course of competition between clubs.<sup>19</sup> However, the degree of egalitarianism in Australian cricket was distinctly limited. Though players were drawn from all classes, the 'dominant clubs' and those who administered the game after 1850 tended to emanate from the socio-economic elite.<sup>20</sup>

During this same period, cricket in Australia attracted increasing numbers of spectators from all social classes. Audiences may initially have been drawn by the chance to drink and gamble, but after 1850 the allure of cricket increasingly resided in the opportunity which it presented for the expression of rivalry between communities. Unlike their counterparts in England, administrators in Australia sought to increase the popularity of the game by encouraging a strong 'working class presence'. To achieve this objective they modernised cricket by constructing 'larger and more commodious' grounds equipped with

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<sup>18</sup> R. Cashman, 'Australia', in B. Stoddart and K. Sandiford. eds, *The Imperial Game: Cricket, Culture and Society*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1998, pp.34-7.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, p.37; J. Daly, *Elysian Fields: Sport, Class and Community in Colonial South Australia, 1836-1890*, John Daly, Adelaide, 1982, p.42.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, pp.124, 126, 128; Cashman, 'Australia', p.38.

more 'modern' scoreboards, and 'accepted league competitions' in which winning was a principal consideration.<sup>21</sup>

However, administrators were not motivated by sentiments of egalitarianism, for they also 'promoted cricket as a fashionable and even exclusive game; while the masses were welcomed as paying spectators, they were subsidiary to the patricians.' Plebeians were carefully segregated from upper and middle class patrons at the major grounds in Australia. A charge of one or two shillings was usually imposed on all spectators who wished to enter the ground itself, but those who wanted to enjoy the comforts of the grandstand were required to pay an additional sum of up to 3s. for the privilege. Given that 2s. 'represented about one-third of the minimum daily wage' in Australia during the 1870s and 1880s, gaining entry to the stand was beyond the capacity of many working class spectators. Consequently the patricians were found 'more in the Members' Reserves' while the plebeians were confined to the 'Outer' or the 'Hill'.<sup>22</sup> Though clear divisions between the classes existed in Australian cricket during the Victorian era, they were less severe than those which endured in England and did not prevent it from becoming the national game of Australia.

Cricket may also have been the most significant sporting activity in New Zealand during the Colonial period. Greg Ryan is certain that this was so.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, cricket remained 'predominantly an urban game' which only became firmly established in many instances after a long and determined struggle. The character of the game, and the ease with which it was conducted, varied greatly between Provinces.

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p.43.

<sup>22</sup> R. Cashman, '*Ave A Go, Yer Mug*': *Australian Cricket Crowds from Larrikin to Ocker*, William Collins Pty. Ltd., Sydney, 1984, pp.11-18.

<sup>23</sup> Ryan, 'New Zealand', p.93.



Prior to the late 1870s, cricket in Auckland depended for its survival on the Imperial troops who garrisoned the town during the war fought in the North against Hone Heke during the 1840s, and that in the Waikato which raged during the 1860s.<sup>24</sup> The few 'civilian' clubs which emerged in Auckland during this period were probably 'open', with a core of players drawn from the local urban élites and a majority being employed in blue collar vocations.<sup>25</sup> Cricket underwent a period of sustained growth in Auckland after 1880. The population of the city increased sharply, from 27, 686 in 1881 to 39, 177 in 1891.<sup>26</sup> The growth of secondary industry, and of the associated industrial workforce, also began during the 1880s. Concomitantly with this demographic shift, the number of cricket clubs and cricketers in Auckland began to rise and the future of the game became more certain.

Despite the fact that the administration of the game stayed in the hands of men from upper echelons of the middling classes, the clubs themselves remained of the socially-mixed 'open' variety. This situation imbued cricket in Auckland with characteristics similar to those which marked rugby football throughout the north of England. The members of the elite who controlled cricket in Auckland usually derived their class status from an involvement in commercial activity rather than from inherited position or wealth. They were frequently involved in the management of small-scale enterprises which fostered a measure of common identity between employer and worker, and therefore were willing to incorporate working men within their clubs.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> M. P. K. Sorrenson, 'Maori and Pakeha', in G. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992, pp.151-2, 155-6.

<sup>25</sup> G. Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', unpublished PhD thesis, Department of History, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1996, pp.57-65.

<sup>26</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1881, 1891.

<sup>27</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.69, 161-4.

Though Wellington was initially a Wakefield community, and therefore in theory a colonial reproduction of the stratified society of rural England before 1800, cricket therein was shaped by several of the same influences and possessed many attributes as the game which evolved in Auckland. Cricket maintained only a precarious foothold in Wellington throughout the 1850s and early 1860s.<sup>28</sup> However, the transfer of the colonial capital from Auckland in 1865 introduced 'a group of influential politicians and public figures' into cricket in Wellington, and subsequently reduced many of the difficulties confronting the game. Though the problem of obtaining sufficient suitable playing surfaces remained, these new luminaries were instrumental in convincing the Town Board to lease the ground at the Basin Reserve to a consortium of local clubs. Acquisition of this new facility equipped local players with their first 'permanent ground' and provided the basis for making 'sustained progress' in developing the urban game. The social structure of cricket in Wellington resembled that which existed in Auckland. A high proportion of players and approximately eighty per cent of administrators were drawn from the urban elite and middling classes, while about forty per cent of players and twenty percent of administrators were engaged in blue collar occupations. Thus while elite groups maintained control of cricket in the capital, the game remained relatively 'open' and 'democratic' in nature and relations between the classes appear to have been amicable.<sup>29</sup>

Cricketers in Dunedin, another Wakefield settlement which was created in 1848 as the capital of the Province of Otago, were not so fortunate. The prospects for cricket appeared bright when a club was established early in 1849. Despite this promising start the game languished during the 1850s, presumably because of the antagonism which developed between the majority of settlers who were members of the Presbyterian Free Church of

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<sup>28</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.38-9, 51-5.

<sup>29</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.51-5, 171-85.

Scotland and the minority who were English.<sup>30</sup> The discovery of gold in Central Otago in 1861 prompted a dramatic expansion of cricket as miners who were devoted to the game arrived from Victoria in large numbers. With the assistance of 'a Provincial Council confident and rejuvenated by gold prosperity', the newly-formed Dunedin Cricket Club (D.C.C.) were able to obtain and prepare a suitable ground in 1862.<sup>31</sup>

Industrialisation occurred in Dunedin at a rate unparalleled elsewhere in New Zealand during the 1870s and early 1880s. Moreover, the population of the city increased from 14,857 in 1871 to 40,887 in 1881.<sup>32</sup> Distinctions between the classes, based most directly on 'residential differentiation', began to emerge. According to Erik Olssen, social institutions, which 'mediated between social strata in small communities, compounded class differences' in Dunedin.<sup>33</sup>

The growing separation of the classes was reflected in senior club cricket from the early 1870s. The D.C.C. remained primarily a haven for players from the urban élites and middling classes. The Carisbrook club, which was formed in 1874, drew its membership almost exclusively from those possessing or aspiring to membership of the urban élites. Clubs catering for players engaged in blue collar occupations experienced some difficulty in becoming established. Working class cricketers were initially accommodated by the Citizens' C.C. and, after the Citizens club collapsed in 1877, by the Albion or Grange clubs. Serious friction arose during the early 1880s over the refusal of the elite clubs which dominated the Otago Cricket Association, and owned the finest grounds in Dunedin, to either select players

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<sup>30</sup> E. Olssen, *A History of Otago*, John McIndoe Ltd., Dunedin, 1980, pp.34, 38-9.

<sup>31</sup> Other clubs were formed at Port Chalmers, Oamaru and in all of the principal towns in Central Otago. Though the D.C.C. perceived itself to be the premier club in the Province, the cricketing miners and runholders resident in the outlying areas constituted the real 'playing strength' of the game throughout the 1860s; Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.99-100, 107-17.

<sup>32</sup> *Census of New Zealand*, 1871, 1881; Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.198.

from blue collar clubs for representative teams or allow any other group to use their facilities. Ryan claims that friction, ill-feeling and disunity pervaded cricket in Otago until the constitution of the Otago Cricket Association was 'democratised' in 1887.<sup>34</sup>

Throughout most of the period between 1850 and 1890, cricket in Canterbury remained a sport primarily of the élites and middling classes. The domination of cricket by the upper ranks of the hierarchy of social groups was preserved by a variety of mechanisms. Firstly, the 'English tradition' of Canterbury attracted 'a disproportionate number of public school and Oxbridge graduates' during the years between 1850 and 1880. These men dominated the game in the Province, on and off the field, until at least the First World War. The second determinant was Christ's College, a replica of the English Public School which emulated its archetype by inculcating the tenets of the 'games cult' in the generations of cricketers who succeeded the first wave of upper and middle class immigrants.

The final guarantee of continued dominance by the élites was the virtually enforced absence of the working classes from the game prior to 1890, a circumstance which is readily explained. It appears certain that relatively few people were able to regularly devote an entire Saturday to the pursuit of leisure. Most categories of worker in the main urban centres evidently worked for eight hours per day, six days per week, with Sunday being observed as a holiday. Domestic servants and the 'large class of shop-assistants'<sup>35</sup> routinely worked for ten hours or more each day. However, some groups of skilled industrial labourers allegedly either 'received a half-holiday'<sup>36</sup> or extended their hours of work on weekdays in order to secure a

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<sup>33</sup> E. Olssen, 'Social Class in Nineteenth Century New Zealand', in D. Pitt, *Social Class in New Zealand*, Longman Paul, Auckland, 1977, p.35.

<sup>34</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.194-7, 199, 201-10.

<sup>35</sup> NZPD, Vol. 64, 1889, p.221.

<sup>36</sup> NZPD, Vol. 49, 1884, p.28.

'half-holiday on Saturday.'<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, comparatively few working men could spend every Saturday in a summer playing cricket. Only during the late 1860s did 'artisans' become established as even a marginal presence in Canterbury cricket, and not until 1882 was a solitary working class club with about twenty members established in Christchurch.

Thus, the game remained primarily a means of fostering ties among the *élites* and the higher ranks of the middling classes of the province. Cricket in Christchurch was largely dominated throughout the period under consideration by urban professionals, while control in the outlying areas of Canterbury rested with runholders or their managerial employees. 'In the hands of local *élites*', observes Greg Ryan, 'cricket clubs served to enhance social cohesion and class delineation in a new and raw Colonial environment, and to facilitate the integration of recent arrivals into the existing society.' The function of cricket in this regard was restricted primarily to the *élites* and middling classes. Indeed, strong connections were forged between the game and 'middle class institutions of social and political power'<sup>38</sup> in the Province.

Though cricket may have fostered a sense of solidarity in Colonial environments among those who actually played, the game was only moderately successful in improving social cohesion among the wider population in Canterbury. The public are seldom mentioned in contemporary reports as attending games at any level of competition in great numbers. The limited amounts of leisure time available to a significant proportion of the population inhibited the development of spectatorship. Consequently, participation in cricket in Christchurch before 1890 was limited primarily to players drawn from the urban *élites* and middling classes. Evidence in support of this assertion is provided by an examination of

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<sup>37</sup> NZPD, Vol. 64, 1889, p.224.

<sup>38</sup> Ryan, 'New Zealand', p.28.

United Canterbury, Midland Canterbury, Lancaster Park, Albion and Addington, the only major clubs to enjoy a protracted existence in the city during this period.

The principal cricket club in the city was that which had been established in 1851 as the Christchurch Cricket Club and had evolved to become the United Canterbury Cricket Club (U.C.C.C.) from 1866. From its foundation this body remained the preserve of the socio-economic elite. Of the thirty-four members who constituted the active core of the Christchurch Cricket Club from 1851 to 1856, twenty were runholders or the owners of large farms. The remainder consisted of three senior civil servants, two lawyers, two surveyors, two proprietors of newspapers, a merchant, a run manager, a surgeon, an estate agent and an individual whose occupation remains unknown.<sup>39</sup> The membership of the Christchurch Cricket Club reflects the situation of Christchurch during this period as a small village dominated by its rural environs and by the economically predominant rural elite.

However, it is probably 'very deceptive' to analyse the membership of the Christchurch Cricket Club simply 'in terms of standard occupational categories.' Many were "gentlemen", and it was wealth and their contribution to provincial administration which determined status, rather than a specific occupation.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, a survey of the membership of the Christchurch Cricket Club indicates that a strong connection existed in Canterbury during this period between cricket and politics, similar to that which endured in England. Fifteen of their number served as Members of the Provincial Council. Eight of the fifteen were also active in colonial politics, as Members of the House of Representatives or the Legislative Council. The extent to which the members became involved in political life certainly demonstrates that the original Christchurch Cricket Club 'contained the core of Canterbury

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<sup>39</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', Tables 5.1 and 5.2; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*.

<sup>40</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.125-33.

leaders and others who did a great deal to shape the future of the province.’<sup>41</sup> Among the players and officials of the Christchurch Cricket Club were several of the most famous names in the history of Canterbury, including J. E. FitzGerald, J. R. Godley, Henry Tancred, Henry Sewell, R. J. S. Harman and Edward Jerningham Wakefield.<sup>42</sup>

The amalgamation of the Christchurch and Canterbury clubs into the U.C.C.C. in February 1866 did not produce ‘a body equal [in] social standing [to] its 1850s predecessor.’<sup>43</sup> Although the new organisation remained socially exclusive, the majority of members were drawn from urban professional groups rather than from the rural elite as had previously been the case. This change indicates that by the mid-1860s Christchurch was a rapidly developing urban centre, rather than simply a meeting place for runholders who lived within easy reach of ‘the town’. Of the twenty-eight players and officials who were active during the 1866-67 season, only eight were runholders or the owners of substantial farms. The balance of the membership consisted of three lawyers, two stock and station agents, two real estate agents, two accountants, two clerks, a senior civil servant, a nurseryman, a commission agent and a schoolmaster. Four players and one official could not be identified with sufficient accuracy to enable their occupations to be determined.<sup>44</sup>

The members of the U.C.C.C. were apparently less inclined to participate in politics than had been those of the Christchurch Cricket Club. Only five individuals involved with the new club sat in the Provincial Council, and just one in the House of Representatives. Moreover, though Samuel Bealey, the Superintendent of Canterbury, served as President

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<sup>41</sup> See Information on Sources in Appendix A. MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*; *Christ's College School List, 1850-1950*, Christ's College Old Boys' Association, Christchurch, 1950, *passim*; Ryan, ‘When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps’, pp.125-33.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, Tables 5.1 and 5.2; MDB, *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*; *Christ's College School List, passim*.

<sup>43</sup> Ryan, ‘When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps’, p.147.

<sup>44</sup> *Press*, 23 February 1866, 4 February 1867; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*.

during early years of its existence, the U.C.C.C. was not so replete with 'men of mark' as had been the Christchurch Cricket Club. A few members were of considerable significance in the Province during this period and for many years thereafter. E. C. J. Stevens, a wealthy land agent, sat in the House of Representatives from 1866 to 1870 and again from 1875 to 1881. William Wilson was a prosperous nurseryman and landowner, a Member of the Provincial Council from 1864 to 1870 and Mayor of Christchurch in 1868.<sup>45</sup> However, the great majority of members remained less prominent in the economic and political structures of the Province. The U.C.C.C. remained the preserve of the upwardly mobile elements of white-collar groups in Christchurch throughout the 1870s and 1880s. In 1890 the playing strength of the club 'was dominated by young clerks such as the Harman brothers who were soon to establish themselves prominently in the public life of Christchurch.'<sup>46</sup>

The absence from the U.C.C.C. of players from outside the ranks of the urban élites was not entirely accidental. The great majority of labouring men who wished to absent themselves regularly from work in order to devote an entire Saturday to playing cricket would probably have experienced great difficulty in obtaining the permission of their employers.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the rules of the club contained barriers which effectively excluded any proletarian sufficiently fortunate to obtain adequate leave. The subscription for all members was set at £2 per annum from 1867, a sum approximately equivalent to one week's wages for most categories of unskilled labourer in Canterbury during the prosperous years of the 1870s.<sup>48</sup> The greatest obstacle confronting players from the working classes was the rule, adopted by the Christchurch Cricket Club and its successors, which required all candidates for

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<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, *passim*; MDB, *passim*; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1965, pp. 503-10; Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.147-8.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, p.212; MDB, *passim*.

<sup>47</sup> Cf., NZPD, Vol. 64, 1889, p.221.

<sup>48</sup> *Statistics of New Zealand*, 'Average Rates of Wages in each Provincial District During the Year', 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879.



membership to be 'nominated' by an existing member. This process was certainly operated with 'discretion.' The Christchurch Cricket Club was required, under the regulations of the Provincial Government, to abandon 'existing membership restrictions' and become '"quite public"' in order to secure a lease on a ground in Hagley Park in 1860. Although the constitution was 'accordingly revised and the name of the club changed' to Canterbury C.C., 'the change was cosmetic rather than actual.'<sup>49</sup>

Ryan has asserted that the composition of other clubs reflects a 'trend towards lower white-collar domination' of cricket in Christchurch during the years before 1900. However, the evidence accumulated by Ryan following his examination of the Midland Canterbury Cricket Club, which was established in September 1870 as the successor to the Albion Cricket Club, indicates that this process was not at all uniform. Unfortunately, the search for information on the Midland club was hampered by the fact that its records do not appear to have survived. Nevertheless, Ryan has established on the basis of the limited evidence which remains that the club initially drew a majority of those members whom he could identify from those engaged in skilled blue collar occupations. The new club also attracted several players and officials from the urban and rural élites. Among these 'recognised public figures' were the runholder Alfred Cox, lawyer and politician W. H. Wynn-Williams, company manager C. E. Briggs, accountant E. S. Harley and 'at least two of the Ollivier brothers'.<sup>50</sup>

The composition of the Midland Canterbury Cricket Club altered as it 'gradually evolved from a working class to a middle class club'.<sup>51</sup> The team of 1880, though it contained a few players engaged in skilled blue collar occupations, was dominated by those emanating from the lower segment of the middling classes. The seven players in this side positively

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<sup>49</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.136.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, pp.151-2; MDB, *passim*; Acland, pp.168-9, 191.

identified by Ryan were, respectively, a brick maker, a carpenter, a draper, a salesman, 'two minor clerks' and George Watson, a Master at Christ's College. However, the senior side of 1890 included 'two bootmakers, a clerk, a compositor, a miller and a telegraphist', all of whom played for Canterbury.<sup>52</sup> Unfortunately, these two samples are too small to enable firm conclusions to be drawn on any trend toward either middling or working class dominance within the club. The Midland club was certainly less overtly elitist than the U.C.C.C., and in fact the occupational profile of its membership resembled that of the 'open' clubs in Auckland and Wellington. The annual subscription of the Midland Canterbury Cricket Club was set at £1 1s in 1872, whereas members of the United club were required to pay £2.

The predominance of those engaged in low white-collar occupations was very evident at the Lancaster Park Cricket Club, which was created in conjunction with the establishment of the new Lancaster Park ground in 1881. The Lancaster Park Cricket Club consisted 'almost exclusively of clerks', particularly those employed by insurance companies.<sup>53</sup>

How was the control of cricket in Christchurch by the *élites* and middling classes perpetuated 'in the face of widespread social change' in other spheres of society? The answer lies largely in the 'network of colonial secondary schools' which developed from the late 1860s. Each of these institutions was 'closely aligned to the English Public School model', and existed primarily to educate the sons of the socio-economic *élites*. Among the most prominent of these academies was Christ's College, which was established under the auspices of the Church of England in 1851. Of slightly less significance was Christchurch Boys' High School, which was founded thirty years later and aspired to be 'a state-funded

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<sup>51</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.212, 210.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, pp.212-3.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p.213.

version of Christ's College'.<sup>54</sup> As faithful reproductions of the English Public School both institutions adopted the 'games cult'. Team games were alleged to have an inherent moral value and were considered to be an indispensable aid to the formation and development of 'character'. Players learned the value of teamwork, and to respect and exercise authority. They also learned the invaluable lesson that pain and failure were a part of everyday experience, and that 'dash' and 'pluck' were essential preconditions for success.<sup>55</sup> Thus team sports would provide the consummate preparation for life in the boardrooms and battlefields of Empire.

As the example provided by Christ's College demonstrates, the consolidation and maintenance of this 'sporting tradition' was ensured by a combination of determinants. As early as 1860 the College had provided adequate facilities by organising its own ground in Hagley Park. Moreover, by 1868 the College had also obtained the use of the plant owned by the U.C.C.C. for an annual rental of £5, a privilege for which the far less affluent Albion Cricket Club was charged £25. Teaching staff were recruited from a 'narrow band' of candidates who 'embodied the quintessentials of Public School and Oxbridge athleticism.' These masters were eventually 'reinforced by their own carefully trained pupils and a clear pattern of recruitment from within the existing structure.' Other methods of perpetuating the sporting tradition of the College were equally important. Headmaster F. A. Hare made his 'greatest contribution' to Christ's College when he established the *Christ's College Register* in 1884. The *Register* chronicled in detail the sporting endeavours of both current pupils and Old Boys, and provided 'successive headmasters and Old Boys with a forum' in which to 'philosophise on the importance of sport.' Evidence indicates that the evangelising which occurred at the school had some practical effect. 'The sentiments expressed in the *Register*,

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<sup>54</sup> J. McAloon, 'The Christchurch Elite', in J. Cookson and G. Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards A City Biography, 1850-2000*, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000, p.208.

observes Ryan, 'helped to create a superior sense of "mission" in the attitude of Christ's College cricketers to their role in local cricket.'<sup>56</sup>

Similar observations might be made with respect to pupils attending comparable institutions elsewhere in the colony. Perhaps as many as one-third of all those who played interprovincial cricket for Auckland and Canterbury between 1860 and 1914 had attended one of these elite institutions. This represented 'a quite disproportionate contribution' to cricket in New Zealand, considering that as late as 1901 they catered to less than three per cent of the male school age population.<sup>57</sup> Many of those who were most prominent in the administration of the game in the colony before 1914 emerged from the same network of institutions. Thus the group of elite schools which included Christ's College produced a cadre of zealots who established a dominant presence in cricket throughout New Zealand.

However, the élites and middling classes were able to consolidate their control of cricket in Christchurch partly because, as in Dunedin, the presence of the working classes in the game before 1890 was so limited. The precarious existence during the 1860s of the Albion Cricket Club, the only club in the city in which players from blue collar backgrounds constituted a significant presence before 1870, suggests that the game was probably not a central institution among the working classes. The Albion Cricket Club was established in 1858 and survived 'in low key fashion' until at least the end of 1864. Throughout this early period, the club lacked both the finance and the influential membership required to develop a suitable ground and seldom provided any serious competition for its more established rival, the U.C.C.C. The inability to secure a ground forced Albion into recess during the years 1866 and 1867. Despite a 'much heralded revival' in October 1867, which will be discussed in

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<sup>55</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp.5, 89-90, 98.

<sup>56</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.151, 254, 257-8, 262-3

another context below, the club lasted only two more seasons. The U.C.C.C. inadvertently expedited the demise of the A.C.C. by consistently overlooking the players of the latter when selecting Canterbury representative teams, and imposing the high rental alluded to above for the partial use of its facilities at Hagley Park.<sup>58</sup>

The social composition of the Albion Cricket Club is difficult to determine with precision. Only four of those who played between 1858 and 1868 can be identified with any degree of certainty. Joseph Bargrove was engaged in business variously as a butcher and builder, while E. P. and W. Maples were publicans and wine and spirit merchants. William Calvert was employed as a tinsmith. Despite the apparent preponderance of members drawn from white-collar occupations, it is likely that the majority were employed in various blue-collar vocations. Ryan believes that 'it is a safe assumption that the lack of information concerning most members of the club is commensurate with their [relatively low] social standing.'<sup>59</sup>

The survival and ongoing prosperity of the predominantly blue-collar Addington Cricket Club, established in 1881, may to some extent have been due to the presence of certain 'influential members'. The Addington team of 1890 contained 'carpenters, clerks, an upholsterer and a storeman.' However, what made this side an 'unusual mix' was the presence of J. A. Caygill, a solicitor, and E. C. J. Stevens, the wealthy real estate agent and Canterbury representative player.<sup>60</sup> The Addington Cricket Club flourished, providing at least two members of the representative Eleven which defeated Otago in 1889.

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, pp.253-4.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*, pp.138, 150.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, pp.150-1.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, pp.216-7.

An apparently protracted inability to attract spectators in significant numbers on a consistent basis severely limited the capacity of club cricket in Christchurch to improve social cohesion among the wider population. The extent to which the game enjoyed the support of the general populace is uncertain. Ryan asserts that in New Zealand, as in England, cricket was 'an essential component of the Victorian psyche'.<sup>61</sup> While this assertion accurately reflects the mentality of most players and administrators, some evidence suggests that a considerable period elapsed before the game made such a deep impression upon the general public of Christchurch. The 'attendance of the general public' at the match between Canterbury and Otago in February 1869 was reportedly 'far larger than there has ever been before'. One journalist was moved to observe that this occurrence would 'no doubt afford the cricketers of the province the gratification of feeling that the Canterbury public are *at last* beginning to take a real interest in the game'.<sup>62</sup> The clear implication of this statement is that the general public had not previously taken a 'real interest' in cricket. However, any expectation that the attention paid to this particular event heralded a sustained interest in club cricket among the population of Christchurch proved to be unfounded. Attendances of the public at matches in Christchurch between provincial representative teams and external opponents throughout the period to 1890 appear to have fluctuated between a few hundred and two thousand.<sup>63</sup>

Club cricket matches did occasionally attract considerable numbers of spectators. The revival of the Albion C.C. in October 1867 was marked by a game on Latimer Square, to which the club 'invited the public to partake of their hospitality'. The club was able to extend this generous offer because of the altruism of 'the tradesmen and others in Christchurch' who had 'largely contributed ... in aid' of the project. A 'substantial lunch' was served from a

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<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, pp.287, 320.

<sup>62</sup> *Press*, 9 February 1869, (*italics added*).

'large and handsome marquee'. Adults were supplied with 'champagne, brandy, [and] ale,' suggesting that spectators from a variety of social backgrounds were expected. Casks of 'raspberry and ginger beer' and quantities of fruit and 'sweetmeats' were provided for the children. A tent was also provided 'exclusively for the use of ladies'. This capacious structure 'was not of the conical order of tent architecture [but] was square in form'. The tent contained 'a table spread all the morning with refreshments, and it was well equipped with easy chairs and profusely decorated with flowers and flags.' A brass band was also on hand to entertain visitors throughout the afternoon. The weather on the day was 'all that could be desired,' with the result that there were 'upwards of two thousand people on the ground.'<sup>64</sup> However, such a response was clearly exceptional. The virtual silence of most match reports on the subject of spectators, while not automatically signifying a total absence, indicates at least their insignificance.<sup>65</sup>

Circumstances conspired to ensure that the situation could not easily be altered. The same protracted hours of labour which prevented the majority of the urban population from participating in the game also precluded their involvement as spectators. Moreover, it is doubtful whether club cricket in Christchurch was capable of generating sufficient excitement to attract spectators in large numbers on a consistent basis, even if they had been able to attend. Many of the matches played between club teams in the city during the 1860s and 1870s probably excited few people other than the participants. Though almost twenty clubs of variable longevity existed in Christchurch and the surrounding districts between 1860 and 1890, metropolitan cricket was characterised for much of this period by a lack of genuine competition. Ryan notes that, rather than increasing the number of clubs participating in the Christchurch senior competition, 'the tendency of the C.C.A was to invite "B" teams from the

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<sup>63</sup> LT, 11 February 1879, 26 January 1889.

<sup>64</sup> LT, 2 October 1867.

existing clubs.’<sup>66</sup> Prior to the integration of the Lancaster Park and Addington clubs into senior cricket during the early 1880s, the majority of games involved various teams from the United Canterbury Cricket Club and the Midland Canterbury Cricket Club.

Moreover, the standard of local cricket fields was not uniformly high. Even the U.C.C.C., which by mid-1867 had spent in excess of £150 to establish a fenced ground in Hagley Park with an artesian well and other facilities, could not always be assured of enjoying an adequate playing surface. One reporter refrained from criticising the fielding in a match played at this venue in 1876 because he did not consider that ‘it was possible to field with any degree of certainty on the ground in its present state.’<sup>67</sup> The standard of some grounds used for senior fixtures had not improved several years later. The wicket provided for the match between the Lancaster Park and United Canterbury clubs in February 1883 was reported to have been so bad that it was improved rather than damaged by the rain which fell during the day.<sup>68</sup> The variable quality of the surfaces on which club fixtures were played in Christchurch almost certainly hindered the efforts of players to develop the skills which would have raised the standard of the game. The minority who were sufficiently fortunate to secure the requisite time away from work presumably expended it in ways they considered more rewarding than watching games which were neither genuinely competitive nor of a very high standard.

Whatever their actual numbers, spectators produced little or no revenue for the cricket clubs of Christchurch. Most of the venues in the city were reserves granted by the central government under one of the Public Reserves Acts to the municipal authorities, which had

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<sup>65</sup> Ryan, ‘When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps’, p.149.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, pp.148-50, 210-11, 214.

<sup>67</sup> *Press*, 10 January 1876.

<sup>68</sup> *LT*, 19 February 1883.



subsequently set them aside for the 'purpose of public health and recreation'.<sup>69</sup> These grounds could be 'enclosed, laid out, and planted, and there may be erected thereon any buildings for ornamental purposes'. However, the law forbade 'making any profits therefrom', and directed that 'no disposition shall be made in respect of any such reserve whereby the public shall be excluded from the free access thereto'.<sup>70</sup> Local authorities had no power to lease reserves, or even to grant their exclusive use to any other organisation. Thus, a cricket club could play on a municipal reserve around which a fence had been constructed, but could not refuse entry to anyone who sought admission and declined to pay whatever charge it might attempt to impose for access. Cricketing bodies in Canterbury were consequently dependent on 'subscriptions and donations' from members of the public who, being under no compulsion, were 'seldom very obliging.'<sup>71</sup>

The lack of revenue severely limited any prospect of making club cricket in Christchurch more attractive to spectators, and as a result becoming more secure in the affections of the wider population. The establishment and maintenance of new clubs, the presence of which might have created a genuine sense of competition, remained all but uneconomic. Although the Christchurch City Council often provided space in public reserves such as Hagley Park to clubs which required it, the clubs had to pay for the construction and maintenance of any facilities they needed. The experience of the United Canterbury C.C. noted above provides an indication of the amount of money required to obtain an adequate ground. Moreover, those clubs already in existence experienced great difficulty in accumulating the wherewithal necessary to make improvements to their grounds which would have increased the comfort of spectators and raised the standard of play.

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<sup>69</sup> 'The Public Reserves Act, 1877', *New Zealand Statutes, 1877*; 'The Public Reserves Act, 1881', *New Zealand Statutes, 1881*.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.302.

Amendments were made to the Public Reserves Act in 1885 which appeared to give sporting bodies exactly what was required. Local authorities were thenceforth permitted to lease reserves for periods of up to three years and countenance the construction of grandstands and pavilions thereon. Of even greater significance was the provision that sporting organisations might enclose such grounds and for a maximum of 'ten days in any year', 'but not more than three days consecutively', demand 'a fee or charge for admission ... not ... exceeding for each day one shilling for each person'. Each patron could also be charged 'an extra shilling for every horse or vehicle which he may desire to take with him, unless [he] desires ... admission to the stand ... in which case an additional ... charge not exceeding ten shillings, may be imposed.' Such charges could not be imposed for 'more than three days consecutively'.<sup>72</sup> However, the benefits were more hypothetical than real for most cricket clubs which, having previously been unable to accumulate significant resources, were in no position to exploit the opportunities offered under the new legislation.

Cricket in the rural districts of Canterbury depended heavily on the patronage of major rural proprietors in order to survive.<sup>73</sup> These men were even more directly involved in the game than those members of the Nobility and the bourgeoisie who repeatedly rescued County and local cricket clubs in England from financial collapse prior to 1914.<sup>74</sup> W. J. Gardner credits Duncan Rutherford, a former captain of the Christ's College XI who managed and eventually inherited the Leslie Hills station, with initiating formally organised cricket in North Canterbury. Rutherford and his brothers jointly established the Amuri Cricket Club in October 1875, thus providing 'the stimulus for frequent matches between

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<sup>72</sup> 'The Public Reserves Act, 1881 Amendment Act, 1885', *New Zealand Statutes, 1885*.

<sup>73</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.237.

Rotherham and Waiau and with Kaikoura.’<sup>75</sup> Gardner believes that ‘Amuri cricket reached its heyday’ under the captaincy and later patronage of Duncan Rutherford, ‘and declined after his death.’<sup>76</sup> Most of the ‘leading players’ throughout the 1870s and 1880s were ‘prominent runholders’.<sup>77</sup> Consequently, regular matches were also arranged between stations, in which masters and employees played alongside one another.

Cricket in mid-Canterbury was also dominated by the rural élites. Seventeen of the thirty-one players who represented ‘Hills’, ‘Plains’ or Ashburton during the summer of 1866-67 have been identified. Among their number were ten runholders, four run-managers, a civil servant, a doctor and a clergyman. Several of the remaining fourteen players ‘almost certainly came from prominent runholding families.’ A ‘close relationship’ developed between the corps of cricketers in mid-Canterbury and the elite clubs in Christchurch. Some of those identified, such as Alfred Cox, A. C. Croft and the Knyvett brothers, were active members of the Christchurch Cricket Club or its successor the U.C.C.C. Moreover, a few followed the example of their metropolitan counterparts by playing significant roles in the political life of the region, the Province or the Colony. Alfred Cox was a Member of the Provincial Council from 1862 to 1865, and again from 1870 to 1871, and of the House of Representatives from 1863 to 1868. William Campbell Walker was not a successful runholder but enjoyed a long and distinguished political career, serving in the Provincial Council during 1866 and 1867 and again from 1874 to 1876. He was a Member of the House of Representatives from 1884

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<sup>74</sup> Cf., W. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988, pp.97-8; K. Sandiford and W. Vamplew, ‘The Peculiar Economics of English Cricket Before 1914’, *British Journal of Sports History*, Vol.3, December 1986, p.323.

<sup>75</sup> Ryan, ‘When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps’, p.237; J. Holm, *Nothing but grass and wind: The Rutherfords of Canterbury*, Hazard Press, Christchurch, 1992, pp.101-5.

<sup>76</sup> W. J. Gardner, *The Amuri: A County History*, The Amuri County Council, Culverden, 1983, pp.242-5.

<sup>77</sup> Ryan, ‘When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps’, p.237.

to 1890, a Member of the Legislative Council and finally the Minister of Education in the government of Richard Seddon during the 1890s.<sup>78</sup>

Cricket in South Canterbury was also heavily dependent on the support of pastoralists. Clubs had been established in Timaru by 1866, Burke's Pass and Winchester during the early 1870s, and in Geraldine, Temuka and Waimate by 1884. The most prominent player at Burke's Pass was C. G. Hawdon, a runholder and Old Rugbician. The Waimate club relied primarily upon the patronage of the Studholme brothers and Robert Heaton Rhodes Jr for its sustenance. John Studholme gained a rowing blue while at Oxford, and remained an active sportsman in South Canterbury. Both he and Rhodes were very prominent in Provincial and Colonial politics.<sup>79</sup>

However, an examination of the Timaru Cricket Club indicates that not all the cricket played in the province outside Christchurch was dominated by runholders. The active membership during the 1873-74 season consisted of three solicitors, two medical practitioners, a magistrate, an accountant, a commission agent, a locksmith, a tailor and the proprietor of a small printing works. Two members cannot be identified. The only member engaged in pastoral pursuits was S. A. Bristol, manager of the Otipua Run near Timaru.<sup>80</sup> Thus the social composition of the Timaru Cricket Club resembled that of a club in a major metropolis, such as the Midland C.C.C. in Christchurch, rather than that of a body dominated by runholders which was more typical in rural Canterbury. Cricket in the country districts of the Province served primarily as a means of fostering relations among the socio-economic elite. However, the example provided by the Timaru C.C. demonstrates that control of the

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<sup>78</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', Table 8.2, p.238; L. G. D. Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, Whitcoulls, Christchurch, 1975, p.142; Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III*, pp.503, 508.

<sup>79</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.240.

game, and the benefits derived therefrom, extended beyond the realm of the major rural proprietor.

Along with rugby football, cricket was felt by a number of people to be the ideal means of fulfilling the very real need to bring the various Provinces 'closer together',<sup>81</sup> a sentiment analogous to that which was simultaneously gaining ground in Australia. Alan Grey observes that New Zealand 'grew out from a few points established by the geography of initial perception and first arrival and by the nature of the land itself.' After ten years of colonisation, he continues, 'the six main settlements, each having a different origin, physical geography, and cultural and economic character, were united only by an external and unreliable saltwater highway.'<sup>82</sup> The importance of sport in general, and of cricket in particular, in fostering inter-community relations was recognised from the earliest days of settlement. One commentator considered that the interprovincial cricket matches between Otago and Canterbury, which were held annually from 1863,

[bring] people together in a friendly informal manner - the very thing which should be most carefully cherished in a society of waifs and strays like that of a colony. It is the isolated conditions of individuals that is the greatest bar not only to good society, but to good government. It unites Otago, for instance, against Canterbury, but unites it in a courteous, chivalrous, generous antagonism ... Nor is it a small thing that cricket draws men from one province to another. Whatever our Canterbury friends may think of our climate, let us hope that they will depart not without feeling that they were very welcome ... [and that] on their next visit [they will] make arrangements for a longer stay.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> TH; various dates, September 1873 – March 1874; Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, p.186; *Superintendent's Roll Book, Province of Canterbury, 1873-74*; *passim*.

<sup>81</sup> NZH, 13 October 1873.

<sup>82</sup> Grey, *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography*, p.166.

<sup>83</sup> ODT, 14 February 1866.

Though this evaluation suggests that cricket fostered the development of closer relations both within and between provinces, the relatively small attendances of the public at inter-provincial cricket matches suggests that the people actually brought together were the élites of the two provinces and those among their employees who were engaged in clerical or managerial occupations.

However, interprovincial cricket failed for several years to serve as a means of 'uniting' the players of Canterbury in 'a friendly informal manner'. The committee of the United C.C.C. initially arrogated to itself the task of selecting and organising the team which would represent the Province against external opponents, and particularly in the annual match against Otago. Consequently the earliest Canterbury sides, with the exception of three members of the Twenty-Two which played George Parr's 'All England XI' on the Hagley Park ground in February 1864, were drawn entirely from the ranks of the U.C.C.C.<sup>84</sup>

The members of the Albion Cricket Club, the only other club of any significance in Christchurch, reportedly resented what they perceived to be their exclusion from representative cricket on the basis of 'class'. Following a humiliating defeat at the hands of Otago in February 1867, the United club relented and announced that thereafter the provincial selection committee should be elected at a public meeting.<sup>85</sup> The principal significance of this reform lay in the fact that players of talent from working-class backgrounds who belonged to the Albion Cricket Club would henceforth be considered for representative honours. This concession was insufficient to improve relations between the two clubs, which were further

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<sup>84</sup> LT, 9 February 1864; *Press*, 8 February 1864; 4 February 1867.

<sup>85</sup> *Press*, 20 May 1867.

strained by the conclusion of the agreement alluded to above regarding the use of facilities at Hagley Park by the Albion club.<sup>86</sup>

The tight control exercised by the U.C.C.C. over the committee which selected representative teams during the 1860s and early 1870s aroused the hostility of both the Albion Cricket Club and its successor, the Midland club. The side which drew with Otago in 1869 was chosen primarily from the United club but contained W. Maples of the Albion Cricket Club, who performed at least as well with the bat as any of his compatriots.<sup>87</sup> However, the inclusion of a player from outside the United club remained the exception rather than the rule.

The Canterbury Cricket Association was established in June 1877, partly in order to eliminate the accumulated antagonism and 'jealousies'. In that it was created to ensure the cooperation of all the metropolitan clubs in organising more effective representative teams, the Canterbury Cricket Association was also a consequence of the developing rivalry with Otago in which sport supplanted politics following the abolition of the Provinces in 1876. Ryan notes that 'pragmatism rather than U.C.C.C. elitism was the only criterion for selecting provincial teams ... after the mid 1870s.'<sup>88</sup> Subsequently the basis upon which representative teams were selected changed in conformity with the number of teams playing in the Senior competition. Otago was comprehensively defeated in February 1879 by a Canterbury Eleven which included at least three players from the Midland Canterbury Cricket Club. The victorious Canterbury team of 1889 consisted of players from the United, Lancaster Park and Addington clubs.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', pp.138, 150.

<sup>87</sup> *Press*, 9 February; 10 February 1869.

<sup>88</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.211.

<sup>89</sup> *Press*, 25 November, 2, 13 December 1878; *LT*, 13 February 1879; 5, 12 November 1888; 28 January 1889.

The growing heterogeneity of the sides being chosen to represent the Province was reflected not only in the number of clubs from which players were drawn but also, to some extent, in the range of occupations in which those players were engaged. Though country cricketers remained excluded, Canterbury teams became more approximately representative of the increasingly complex urban society which was evolving in Christchurch during this period. The Canterbury Eleven selected for the game against Otago in 1879 was composed primarily of players drawn from the urban elite and middling classes. Of the seven who can be positively identified two were clerks, while the others were the Headmaster of Christ's College, an accountant, a commercial traveller, a coach-builder and a bricklayer.<sup>90</sup> However, the Representative team chosen ten years later included three clerks, a sheepfarmer, a solicitor, a storeman, a clicker (footwear worker) and a labourer.<sup>91</sup> Thus, by 1890 the Provincial Eleven had evolved from an entity which represented only the élites into a body which, by incorporating players from a wide variety of backgrounds, may have become a symbol of unity across classes for the cricketers of the Province.

The extent to which fixtures involving Canterbury representative teams excited any interest among the wider population during this period was more limited. In attempting to create cricket of sufficient quality to attract large numbers of spectators on a regular basis, the Canterbury Cricket Association encountered virtually the same obstacles which confronted its constituent clubs in their efforts to achieve the same objective. The most pressing need was the organisation of a regular supply of money. The Canterbury Cricket Association was prevented by the various Public Reserves Acts in force prior to 1885 from enclosing any land set aside for public recreation and imposing a charge for admission thereto, and therefore

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<sup>90</sup> LT, various dates, September 1878 – March 1879; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*; Freeholders Return, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*.



faced enormous difficulties in creating a venue from which it might have secured a constant stream of revenue. In order to cover their costs and survive, notes Ryan, 'the provincial associations were at the mercy of public subscriptions and donations.'<sup>92</sup> Spectators at matches involving the representative team played on grounds to which free admission was assured, and who were consequently under no compulsion to pay, proved as reluctant as their counterparts at club fixtures to make voluntary contributions. The parsimony of the public under such circumstances appears to have extended to all levels of cricket.

Not even on the occasion of a particularly significant fixture, which many enthusiasts among the elite thought might arouse heightened interest in cricket, could the public be induced to part with any substantial sum in support of the game. In November 1863 Shadrach Jones, a publican and speculator of Dunedin, financed the visit to that city of the 'All-England XI' of professional cricketers captained by George Parr. For 'a sum of not less than £1000 ... [and] the whole of the emoluments which may accrue' from all other activities associated with the match, Jones offered to arrange a fixture between Parr's team and another representing Canterbury.<sup>93</sup> Debate raged over the merits of the proposal. The visit was propounded by some as being vital for the future of the Province. With a sound performance against 'these splendid cricketers' by a local twenty-two, the reputation of the Canterbury settlement 'will be "made" once and for all in the estimation of that numerous band which comprises the very flower of England's youth - the cricketers.' 'We *must* have the 'Eleven' here', one writer stated emphatically,

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<sup>91</sup> LT, various dates, September 188 – March 1889; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*; Electoral Rolls, 1890, *passim*.

<sup>92</sup> Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.302.

<sup>93</sup> LT, 3, 10 November 1863.

we cannot afford to miss the chance. In a pecuniary sense we should lose far more than the amount necessary to bring them up by allowing ourselves to be passed over and ignored.<sup>94</sup> (*italics in original.*)

Other advantages were also claimed for the venture. Richard Harman asserted that adult players who had not seen 'cricket played in a first class manner' for thirteen years, and the 'boys of Canterbury' who had never enjoyed this 'comparative advantage', would derive enormous benefits. Therefore he was 'willing to contribute liberally' towards the cost of the scheme, 'not simply for his own gratification and love of the game, but in consideration of the benefit it would be to the boys of Canterbury.'<sup>95</sup> Harman and a small group of other 'altruistic' and prosperous cricketers, including his business partner E. C. J. Stevens, provided the financial guarantees necessary to ensure that the visit proceeded.

Members of the general population were urged, in their own interest, to contribute generously to the cost of the venture. The editor of the *Lyttelton Times* trusted

that the public will heartily support those gentlemen who have undertaken to arrange the affair, not only with their liberal money subscriptions, but with the enthusiasm which is so necessary in affairs of this kind, and which is so generally displayed by all Englishmen in favour of the noble game of cricket.<sup>96</sup>

'Is it too much to expect', he entreated, 'that the public of Canterbury will come forward and bear their share in Mr Jones' enterprise?'<sup>97</sup> Common to all of these appeals was the presupposition that the inhabitants of Canterbury were members of a cultural community which embraced all 'Englishmen' throughout the world. Consequently the colonists should

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<sup>94</sup> LT, 7 November 1863.

<sup>95</sup> LT, 10 November 1863.

<sup>96</sup> LT, 7 November 1863.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*

be willing to make sacrifices for the sake of a project which would propagate among them a 'noble' element of their cultural inheritance, while simultaneously offering considerable material rewards. Notwithstanding the misgivings which persisted among 'some of the [Canterbury Cricket] Club and of the public' that the affair was simply a scheme to line the pockets of Shadrach Jones, the All England XI arrived in Canterbury in February 1864.<sup>98</sup>

However, the general population was not entirely unstinting in its support of the venture. The committee formed in November 1863 to arrange the visit was certain 'that the benefits accruing to the province ... were so great and [obvious], that ... the public required no urging' to subscribe the difference between the £1000 required and the £600 raised by Harman and his associates.<sup>99</sup> For two months from mid-November 1863 a subscription list lay at the offices of *The Press*, and a network of collectors was maintained throughout Christchurch. The early optimism of the organisers proved misplaced, for the amount obtained was apparently insufficient to make the undertaking a financial success.<sup>100</sup> However, the match provided a performance which attracted thousands of spectators over three days, even though the Public Reserves Act prohibited the imposition of a gate charge.

Attendances at interprovincial matches produced no greater financial return. Although the crowd on the first day of the match between Canterbury and Otago held at Hagley Park in Christchurch in February 1879 numbered about two thousand, the reporter for the *Lyttelton Times* surmised that 'the receipts cannot have been amazingly large.'<sup>101</sup> Had the law permitted the enclosure of the ground and the imposition of a charge of 1s for admission, approximately £100 would have been extracted from that number of spectators.

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<sup>98</sup> LT, 3 November 1863; *Press*, 23 December 1863.

<sup>99</sup> LT, 10 November 1863.

<sup>100</sup> *Press*, 12 November 1863; LT, 16 January 1864; D. Grant, *On A Roll: A History of Gambling and Lotteries in New Zealand*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1994, pp.40-2.

The amendments to the Public Reserves Act required to produce such an outcome were made in 1885 but the C.C.A. derived no greater benefit from the new legislation than its constituent clubs. The Association had attempted to provide itself with a reliable source of revenue in 1881 by becoming heavily involved in the scheme to establish a 'private ground' at Lancaster Park. However, the predicted benefits did not materialise. The costs incurred in developing the ground greatly exceeded the expectations of the promoters, necessitating the negotiation of a commercial loan of £4,000 at an interest rate of eight percent. Interest payments amounted to £260 per annum, with another £150 being required to pay the wages of a groundsman and provide for maintenance. Subsequently, 'the Canterbury Cricket Association ... operated under the shadow of huge liabilities.'<sup>102</sup>

Furthermore, the number of spectators who were able to obtain entire days away from work to attend cricket matches, and were willing to pay for the privilege of doing so, appears to have been far lower than the Canterbury Cricket Association had anticipated. The match played at Lancaster Park in 1889 between Canterbury and Otago 'started in the presence of about fifty spectators, which number was perhaps subject to a sevenfold increase during the afternoon.'<sup>103</sup> Had an admission charge of 1s per head been imposed, an attendance of these proportions over the three days occupied by the fixture would have yielded total gate receipts of only £52 10s. Thus, being almost perpetually in debt and unable to generate revenue through the gate, the Canterbury Cricket Association lacked the funds necessary to compensate players for earnings lost while engaged in representative matches or to develop a regular programme of touring. 'It was therefore difficult', concludes Ryan, 'to secure the

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<sup>101</sup> LT, 11 February 1879.

<sup>102</sup> T. W. Reese, 'History of Lancaster Park, Christchurch', Christchurch, c.1935, pp.7-10; Ryan, 'When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.306.

<sup>103</sup> LT, 26 January 1889.

quality of teams necessary to make interprovincial cricket attractive to the paying public.’<sup>104</sup> The attendances at matches in Christchurch between teams representing Canterbury and external opponents during this period were generally modest, suggesting that interprovincial cricket aroused only limited interest among the wider population of the Province. However, it is also possible that difficulties obtaining time away from work and, after home games were held at Lancaster Park in 1881, the imposition of a charge at the gate prevented people who were interested from attending.

With the exceptions of the Addington and Timaru clubs, cricket in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890 remained primarily a game for players from the élites and middling classes, both urban and rural. The dominance of the élites was maintained by a variety of mechanisms. The most prominent players and administrators were either English immigrants educated in the public schools or Universities, or locals who had been educated in one of the Colonial secondary schools which aligned itself with the public school model. In either case, these men had been initiated into the ‘games cult’ and, in consequence, were deeply committed to the preservation and promotion of cricket. This commitment found tangible expression in an active and prolonged involvement in the game. The limited presence of the working classes was primarily a consequence of the limited leisure time available to labouring people before the enactment of the legislative reforms of the 1890s. It was not until 1882 that a working class club with approximately twenty members became permanently established in Christchurch.

Thus, the game cultivated a sense common identity primarily among the elite groups of the Province. Control of cricket in Christchurch throughout the period under consideration

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<sup>104</sup> Ryan, ‘When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps’, p.312.

rested largely with urban white-collar professionals while in the rural areas of Canterbury, with the exception of the Timaru C.C., the game depended on the patronage of runholders or their managerial employees. Ryan has recognised that cricket fostered a sense of community in the turbulent conditions of the newly formed Colonial society of Canterbury when under the governance of these local *élites*. However, the game probably lacked the capacity to have a similar effect upon the wider population. The public seldom attended matches at any level of competition in great numbers. Relatively few people could spare the time to watch cricket on a regular basis, and the inherently unexciting metropolitan club competition offered little encouragement to those who might otherwise have been inclined to do so. Therefore, cricket in Canterbury remained a game primarily for players, particularly those emanating from the *élites* and the middling classes. Cricket certainly did not enjoy the level of support accorded by all classes in the Province to that other truly English game, football.

Illustration XX

# ***KNITTING MEN TOGETHER IN ONE MIND AND SPIRIT***



## ***FOOTBALL IN CANTERBURY 1850-1890***

*CHAPTER 7*  
*‘KNITTING MEN TOGETHER IN ONE MIND AND SPIRIT’ :1*  
*FOOTBALL IN CANTERBURY, 1854–1890*

Between 1854 and 1890 football rose from relative obscurity to become one of the most popular and important sporting activities in Canterbury. Therefore, the development of football has much more in common with cricket, which also rose to prominence from small beginnings, than it has with athletics, rowing and ploughing matches, all of which enjoyed early pre-eminence but declined in relative significance after 1880. Until the mid-1870s football was the game of a small fraternity consisting of the players themselves, their immediate families and a fairly limited circle of other enthusiasts. However, the arrival of the Rugby Union game in 1875 signified the transformation of football into a sport which attracted many more players and growing numbers of spectators. By 1880 rugby football had become widely accepted within Canterbury as a means of protecting the ‘honour of the Province’ against an array of external ‘enemies’. The paradox inherent in the evolution of rugby football in Canterbury is that while the game fostered the development of a sense of provincial identity across social classes, its rise to primacy was brought about through the creation of an ever-expanding network of sporting rivalries within the province.

From the start, players and administrators sought and, if necessary, created rivalry. House contended against House at Christ’s College, and the College competed against the Christchurch Football Club (C.F.C.). Within the C.F.C., matches were arranged between teams which were organised according to alphabetical, geographical and occupational criteria.



From 1872 the C.F.C. maintained an active search for new competition and attempted to foster rivalries with external opponents. This drive to increase the number of rivalries led the C.F.C. to propose the adoption of a uniform set of rules by all other clubs which were established within the Province. The opportunity to play against a touring team from Auckland led the C.F.C. to adopt the rugby union code, initially on an experimental basis, in 1875. This marked the beginning of regular interprovincial competition, based on Rugby Union football, which bound the provinces together through mutual rivalry. Inter-provincial competition popularised the game and clubs proliferated, with rugby emerging as the premier sport in the colony.

These developments strongly indicate that the provinces existed as distinct communities which had developed clear and separate identities, and were increasingly motivated by intercommunal rivalry to perceive football principally as a means of expressing and defending their provincial 'pride'. Therefore, as in the north of England, each community might have been driven to convert its 'indigenous talent into an enthusiastic machine, and [to] insist on the fact that the machine is always in working order.'<sup>2</sup>

The constant drive to foment an increasing number of rivalries had the unintended effect of fostering a sense of provincial identity among a growing proportion of the population of Canterbury. Players from competing teams were drawn together through common pleasurable experiences as they participated in a game conducted under a uniform set of rules. Thus, although they were rivals on the field, a hypothetical combination of 'hosts' and 'visitors' shared a discourse which facilitated friendly interchange and a sense of rugby fraternity.

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<sup>1</sup> ODT, 29 August 1878.

The manner in which rugby football evolved in Canterbury differed in many significant respects from the process through which it had been created in Britain. Rugby football in Britain was derived from a number of informal, ill-disciplined and relatively brutal 'folk games', at least some of which involved handling the ball.<sup>3</sup> These various forms of football were generally held in disrepute by the upper and middle classes. However, football underwent a process of 'incipient modernisation' and 'civilization' when adopted by various public schools, including Rugby, as a means of absorbing the energies of, building character within and instilling discipline among hordes of previously unruly pupils.<sup>4</sup> From about 1850 the form of football created as an exercise in self-government by the boys at Rugby entered the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and gradually became the pre-eminent winter sport there.

Within a few years the first rugby clubs had been established by 'young men [who] came down from university or left their public school to join the professions or go into business [and] sought ways of continuing the games' they had formerly enjoyed.<sup>5</sup> Two forms of club had begun to evolve by the time the Rugby Football Union (R.F.U.) was established at the Pall Mall Restaurant, London, in January 1871.<sup>6</sup> Control of rugby football clubs remained vested firmly in the hands of men drawn from the upper and middle classes. The 'socially exclusive' bodies, from which the 'lower orders' were ostracised by means of legalistic contrivances, remained the preserve of the upper classes and of a growing middle class elite which had been educated at public school, and possibly at Oxford or Cambridge.<sup>7</sup> These organisations were concentrated principally in London and the Home Counties of South-East

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<sup>2</sup> E. Dunning and K. Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, Price Milburn & Co. Ltd., Wellington, 1979, p.148.

<sup>3</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989, p.14.

<sup>4</sup> Cf Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players* Ch. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British* p.

<sup>6</sup> Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players*, p.121.

England, in Edinburgh and its environs in Scotland and in Dublin and Belfast in Ireland. The clubs categorised by Dunning and Sheard as 'open', in the sense that they admitted members 'from different levels in the class hierarchy',<sup>8</sup> were generally controlled by the segment of the middle classes which had seldom attended public school and instead derived its status from involvement in commerce or industry. 'Open' clubs were located primarily in the North of England, the Midlands, Wales and, to some extent, in South-West England. It was largely through these organisations, which were established mostly in regions where most of the industrial workplaces possessed 'a social structure characterised by low barriers to class interaction',<sup>9</sup> that the working classes became a significant presence in British rugby.<sup>10</sup>

The first recorded football match of any type in the Province of Canterbury was held on 16 December 1854, when the fourth anniversary of the Canterbury settlement was celebrated with a fete which included a wide range of athletic sports and 'folk games'.<sup>11</sup> Organised football commenced in Canterbury when in April 1862 a committee of senior boys at Christ's College formulated a set of rules based upon those of the so-called 'National Game' played at Radley College in England.<sup>12</sup> The first formal match was played on Latimer Square in June 1862 between a twenty-two drawn from the 'Fellows' and pupils of Christ's College and another consisting of 'townspeople'.<sup>13</sup> The game became truly institutionalised in Canterbury with the establishment of the Christchurch Football Club in August 1863. The C.F.C. drafted its own set of rules which, though no copy appears to have survived, were

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<sup>7</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p.110-1.

<sup>8</sup> Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players*, p.141.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, pp.136, 141.

<sup>10</sup> S. Barlow, 'The Diffusion of 'Rugby' Football in the Industrialized Context of Rochdale, 1868-90: A Conflict of Ethical Values', *IJHS*, Vol.10, No.1, April 1993, p.53.

<sup>11</sup> LT, 20 December 1854.

<sup>12</sup> D. Hamilton, 'College': *A History of Christ's College*, Christ's College Board of Governors, Christchurch, 1996, pp.47-8.

<sup>13</sup> LT, 21 June 1862.

reportedly 'very similar' to those of the College.<sup>14</sup> Thereafter, until the mid-1870s, football in Canterbury was centred on these two bodies.

The style of game played by these footballers is difficult to determine, largely because reports of matches carried in the newspapers at this time were vague and uninformative. Nevertheless, the available evidence indicates that by 1871 a variety of football had evolved in Canterbury which resembled 'soccer' as it was played in England before 1880.<sup>15</sup> The principal feature of the game was something approximating a loose 'scrimmage', in which most of the players from one side congregated with the ball at their feet and attempted to force it past the combined strength of their adversaries. Success in this manoeuvre frequently led to 'rushes', in which a group of players swept the ball down the field towards their opponents' goal. These 'scrimmages' and 'rushes' were interspersed with occasional attempts by individuals to 'dribble' the ball around or through the opposition. Handling of the ball was kept to a minimum, perhaps because the restrictions on doing so contained in the rules of Christ's College typified the constraints under which the game was played more generally within Canterbury. Football in Canterbury during this period had few similarities with rugby.<sup>16</sup>

During the early 1870s the number of footballers and clubs in the Province slowly increased, and gradually but perceptibly many features of the rugby code were incorporated into the game. By August 1871 the rules of the C.F.C. permitted goals to be scored by either Association or rugby methods. Between 1872 and 1874 players began handling the ball, scrimmaging and adopting positions on the field more characteristic of rugby than of

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<sup>14</sup> LT, 22 September 1865.

<sup>15</sup> T. Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, Harvester Press, Brighton, Sussex, 1981, pp.207-8.

<sup>16</sup> LT, 21 August 1871; 21 May, 3, 17 June, 18 August 1872; WP, 3 August, 7 September 1867; 24 June 1871; 14 June 1873.

Association football.<sup>17</sup> The increased incidence of 'squabbling' and 'ill-discipline' which afflicted football in Canterbury during 1874 was attributed by contemporaries, at least partly, to difficulties inherent in properly implementing the rules incorporated into the local game from rugby. The fundamental problem was that the rules being transplanted either contained inherent weaknesses or were inadequately translated. Some of the new laws provoked dissension because they were insufficiently comprehensive to provide adequate guidance under unusual circumstances.<sup>18</sup> Difficulties also arose because other laws, such as that relating to off-side, prescribed no penalty for the punishment of infringements.<sup>19</sup>

By the end of July 1874 the degree of conflict and confusion being generated as a by-product of the effort to integrate the rules of rugby football into the local game piecemeal, had convinced at least one commentator to suggest that 'the difficulty will ... only be got over by the adoption of Rugby Union rules.'<sup>20</sup> However, this solution had been canvassed and decisively rejected two months earlier. At the behest of Montague Lewin, who had played the game in England before coming to Christchurch in 1873, the C.F.C. staged the first recorded rugby match in Canterbury on 30 May 1874. The members of the C.F.C. reportedly discovered rugby football to be 'as totally different from the club's present rules as anything could possibly be', and decided that it was too rough and 'not a patch'<sup>21</sup> on their own game. Two matches against the South Canterbury Football Club in May 1875 served merely to reinforce the apparently widespread belief within the C.F.C. that rugby was an 'exceedingly dangerous and brutal' activity.<sup>22</sup> We shall see that only the prospect of creating a far more significant

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<sup>17</sup> LT, 7 August 1871; 6 May, 18 August 1872; 3 August 1874; WP, 23 May 1874; 26 July 1875.

<sup>18</sup> LT, 20 July 1874.

<sup>19</sup> LT, 13 July 1874.

<sup>20</sup> LT, 27 July 1874.

<sup>21</sup> LT, 1 June 1874.

<sup>22</sup> LT, 25 May 1875.

rivalry than that which it might have established with the South Canterbury Football Club convinced the Christchurch club to adopt rugby rules.

Identifying the people who played football in Canterbury during the 1860s and early 1870s is difficult. Because the records of the C.F.C. relating to the earliest years of its existence have been lost even the exact number of members who belonged to the club remains unknown, though it was probably in excess of one hundred during any year between 1864 and 1874. The initials of individuals involved in club meetings and matches were frequently omitted from the accounts of these activities which were published in local newspapers. For example, reports of fixtures involving more than fifty players appeared in the *Lyttelton Times* and the *Press* throughout the 1860s and early 1870s in which no more than five or six surnames were mentioned.

These difficulties notwithstanding, a few of those who played for the C.F.C. during the early years of its existence can be identified with certainty. The information contained in Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 indicates that the majority of members were drawn from the middling classes, with the single largest group being engaged in clerical occupations. The numbers examined in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 are admittedly too small to be meaningful on their own, but they are supported by both qualitative data on the origins of rugby football among the elite and middling classes and they depict the same state of affairs as Tables 7.3. and 7.4 in which the numbers of subjects are greater. It may appear slightly anomalous that the middling classes were so much more heavily represented than the elite in the ranks of the C.F.C., given that the elite institution of Christ's College was the strongest supporter of football outside the club. It is probable that football was a game for young men who were often destined to join the elite, but were still serving an 'apprenticeship' as articled clerks or employees in commercial or financial

concerns. Many of this latter group were themselves, doubtless, sons of members of the elite who would eventually ascend to that level of the social hierarchy.

**TABLE 7.1**  
**CHRISTCHURCH FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1864<sup>23</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	1
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	7*
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	2
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*includes one schoolboy

**TABLE 7.2**  
**CHRISTCHURCH FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1872<sup>24</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	2
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	7*
(b) Semi-professionals	1
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	1
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	1
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*includes one schoolboy

<sup>23</sup> See Information on Sources in Appendix A. LT, 20 August 1864. MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*.

<sup>24</sup> LT, 11, 29 April, 20 May 1872; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*.

The hypothetical possibility exists that at least some of the players may be anonymous principally because they were members of the working classes. Because the *New Zealand Electoral Rolls* published between 1860 and 1878 contained no information on the occupations of registered voters, the tables in the text which contain data relating to the period prior to 1879 are of necessity based on sources which are unlikely to contain information on members of the working classes. The unpublished 'Canterbury Dictionary of Biography' contains very few entries for blue collar workers and virtually none for women, and because inclusion in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* was by subscription<sup>25</sup> this source was concerned with extolling the achievements of 'local worthies'. Thus, both sources are marked by an inherent bias toward male members of the élites and middling classes.

**TABLE 7.3**  
**CHRISTCHURCH FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1874<sup>26</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	6
(b) Major rural proprietors	2
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	3
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	21*
(b) Semi-professionals	4
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	1
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	4
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	2
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	1

\*includes three schoolboys, one student at a tertiary institution

However, it appears probable that few if any of those who played football during the 1860s and early 1870s were blue collar workers. Even when sources which abet the

<sup>25</sup> C. Toynbee, 'Class and Social Structure in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', NZJH, Vol.13, No.1, April 1979, p.70.

<sup>26</sup> LT, various dates, March - September, 1874; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia*, *passim*



identification of such people become available, in particular the *Electoral Rolls* published from 1879, almost no manual workers can be associated with the Christchurch F.C. Therefore, since the factors which facilitated the involvement of the working classes in sport were becoming stronger after 1879, it is safe to conclude that if the C.F.C. had few working class members in 1879-80 it almost certainly had very few or none at all during the preceding years.

Football in Canterbury prior to the mid-1870s was largely an integrating activity for devotees of the game. Each of the clubs was, as Steven Riess has observed of sports clubs established by the elite and middling classes in the United States during this period, a 'voluntary association organized to facilitate athletic competition between people of similar backgrounds.'<sup>27</sup>

Football in the province was characterised by both its comparative informality and the tendency of participants to create and sustain rivalries between groups situated within the Province. Christ's College organised regular matches each season between its various Houses, between teams of 'Past' and 'Present' pupils and between 'combined' College sides and 'external' opponents including the Heathcote Football Club which existed only during the 1872 season.<sup>28</sup> However, by far the most significant external rival cultivated by the College was the C.F.C. Contests between College teams and the Christchurch Club were the major fixtures in local football before 1875. The apparent congruity between the rules of the College and those drafted by the Club facilitated both regular competition between them and the entry of many 'old boys' and some pupils of the former into the ranks of the latter.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> S. A. Riess, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, Harlan Davidson Inc., Wheeling, Illinois, 1995, p.48.

<sup>28</sup> LT, 3, 10 June 1872; *Press*, 15 July 1872.

<sup>29</sup> LT, 22 September 1865; 2 July 1866; 10 May, 9 August 1869; 18 June, 4 July, 15 August 1870; 19 June 1871; WP, 2 July 1870; 14 June, 23 August 1873.

The C.F.C. also entered enthusiastically into competition with the other clubs which emerged in Canterbury before 1875, even though the lives of these bodies were relatively short. A desire to facilitate competition between itself and as many 'clubs of other localities' as possible motivated the C.F.C. to propose in April 1872 the unification of the rules under which football was played in the Province. Later that same month the *Lyttelton Times* was 'glad to find that clubs are in the course of formation at Kaiapoi and Woolston,' for it was anticipated that this 'will give an impetus to football by creating a rivalry between the town and country clubs.'<sup>30</sup> This sentiment was heartily reciprocated. For instance, the Lyttelton F.C. was so eager to play the Christchurch Club that in May 1867 the members 'unanimously resolved to ... request permission from Messrs. Holmes and Co. to *walk through the* [unfinished Lyttelton rail] *tunnel*..<sup>31</sup>

However, many of the matches in Canterbury prior to 1875 were played between 'casual' teams organised from within the Christchurch Football Club itself, as the members attempted to maintain a sense of rivalry inside their own ranks. The bases on which sides were selected included 'alphabetical' ones, with players divided according to their surnames into teams designated 'A to L' and 'M to Z'; 'geographic' ones, in which the division was made according to the location of a residence in the city; or 'sporting' ones, which entailed the distribution of players according to their sporting affiliations outside football.<sup>32</sup>

The players had little difficulty in acquiring the necessary infrastructural support. Christ's College apart, every club obtained the administrative and social facilities it required by utilising a particular hotel. The Christchurch Football Club initially patronised White's Commercial Hotel, but relocated to Coker's Hotel from April 1872. The Lyttelton Football

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<sup>30</sup> LT, 19 April 1872.

<sup>31</sup> LT, 31 May 1867, italics added.

Club in effect used the Queen's Hotel in the town as its clubrooms. During its brief existence the Heathcote Football Club conducted all meetings at the Wharf Hotel in Woolston, and played its few 'home' matches in the adjoining 'Stace's Paddock'.<sup>33</sup> Hotels provided a setting in which the male members of the footballing fraternity in Canterbury could interact and form or consolidate relationships on the basis of their common interests and experiences.

Matches were played at a variety of venues to which the public were guaranteed free access. Christ's College staged 'home' matches on its own ground located near the school. The Christchurch Club was initially domiciled at Latimer Square, transferring its activities to the neighbouring Cranmer Square in 1871. The Lyttelton Football Club experienced great difficulty in securing a suitable ground and was forced to play at several 'paddocks' dispersed throughout the bays across the harbour from the town or at venues in the Heathcote Valley 'kindly placed at their disposal' by George Holmes, the railway contractor. Thus, the earliest football fields in Canterbury were either undeveloped public spaces to which admission could not legally be charged or rough private land which, through the altruism of its owner, became 'de facto' a public space for the duration of the event.<sup>34</sup>

New modes of transport, particularly the nascent railway and a number of small steam-powered vessels, usually lent by altruistic owners, facilitated the movement of teams and supporters and thereby fostered increased interaction among the members of the fraternity. For example, it was 'Through the liberality of Mr [H. P. Murray-]Aynsley', who placed the steamer *Gazelle* of forty-six tons 'at the service of the members' of the Lyttelton Football Club 'and their friends', that approximately one hundred people were able to attend a match at

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<sup>32</sup> LT, 18 May, 31 August 1868; 7, 21, 26 June 1869; 2 May 1870; 1, 15 May 1871.

<sup>33</sup> LT, 19 July, 20 September 1864; 31 July, 16 August 1865; 22 April 1870; 1 May, 10 July 1871; 9 April, 18 May 1872.

Bradley's paddock in September 1864.<sup>35</sup> Such generous offers were frequently made by the owners and operators of mechanised transport, and appear always to have been gratefully accepted by footballers in Canterbury.<sup>36</sup>

The extent to which the wider circle of enthusiasts availed themselves of the opportunities thus presented to attend football matches cannot be determined with any precision. It is virtually impossible to determine the size or socio-occupational structure of crowds attending football matches in Canterbury during the period before 1875. Newspaper reports typically make subjective allusions to 'a considerable number of spectators' or 'large number of persons'.<sup>37</sup> However, the specific information contained in a few isolated accounts suggests that a typical match attracted between fifty and two hundred spectators.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the game appears to have attracted a fairly small but solid core of loyal supporters.

A circumstance considered worthy of mention was the presence of women among the crowds watching football matches. The correspondent who observed a match at Bradley's paddock asserted that 'We were glad to see that a large number of ladies accompanied the excursionists', though he did not say why their presence pleased him.<sup>39</sup> Another report of a match between the C.F.C. and Christ's College in June 1871 included the comment that 'a goodly number of spectators' had attended, 'including a sprinkling of the fair sex - by the way, not so many as we should like to have seen.'<sup>40</sup> The fortitude exhibited by female spectators drew favourable comment in May 1872. 'Several ladies were present to witness the game',

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<sup>34</sup> R. T. Brittenden, *"Give 'Em The Axe": The First Hundred Years of the Christchurch Football Club*, Fuller Bros. Ltd, Christchurch, 1963, pp.8-9; Hamilton, 'College', p.47; LT, 19 July, 30 July, 23 August, 15 September 1864; 31 July, 26 August, 11, 22 September 1865; 10 June, 9 September 1867; 9 May 1868; 10 May 1869; 25 July 1870; 29 April 1871.

<sup>35</sup> LT, 20 September 1864.

<sup>36</sup> LT, 20 September 1864; 27, 31 July, 26, 28 August 1865; WP, 1 June 1867.

<sup>37</sup> *Press*, 22 August 1864; LT, 31 July 1865; 20 June 1870.

<sup>38</sup> LT, 20 September 1864; WP, 1 June 1867.

<sup>39</sup> LT, 20 September 1864.

<sup>40</sup> LT, 26 June 1871.

noted an observer, 'notwithstanding that the weather was very unpleasant, and remained for some time.'<sup>41</sup> The footballing fraternity clearly welcomed any interest taken by female spectators in its manly endeavours.

The advent of the rugby union game in 1875 marked the transformation of football into a sport which involved many more clubs, attracted increasing numbers of spectators, possessed a more complex and ordered form of competition, and accumulated a very welcome array of opponents from outside the Province. Indeed, rugby was used from its inception as a means of defending the 'honour' of the province. This occurred for two basic reasons. The New Zealand in which the game developed during the mid-1870s consisted of several provinces, each constituting a clearly defined unit able to command the loyalty of some proportion of its inhabitants. A sense of communal identity was cultivated within each of the provinces by a combination of factors. One of these was religion, a circumstance frequently determined at the province's foundation. Presbyterianism predominated in Otago and Anglicanism in Canterbury, while some of the Dissenting churches became established in Nelson. Moreover, transport and communication between the widely separated centres of population located in the provincial 'capitals' remained primitive and unreliable before the comprehensive telegraph, rail and steam navigation networks were constructed during the 1870s. Thus, the individual provinces developed socially and economically in relative isolation. Above all, the provinces enjoyed more than twenty years of partial, though substantial, self-government.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> LT, 20 May 1872.

<sup>42</sup> M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1990, pp.171-4; M. McKinnon, and others, *Bateman New Zealand historical atlas*, David Bateman in association with Historical Branch, Dept. of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 1997, Plate 53; J. McAloon, *Nelson: A Regional History*, Cape Catley in association with the Nelson City Council, Nelson, 1997, pp.44-5, 56-7, 89-90; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, Christchurch, 1965, p.233.

With the demise of the Provinces as semi-autonomous political entities at the end of 1876, and the relocation of power to the central government in Wellington, the middle classes in many parts of the colony searched for a new means of maintaining Provincial identity and expressing civic pride. Contests between representative sports teams were widely considered to be the ideal solution. Alfred St. George Hamersley told the guests attending the dinner which followed an interprovincial rugby match in 1878 that 'although the lines of [political] demarcation had been abolished, he still hoped to see the rivalry in cricket and football remain between Otago and Canterbury.'<sup>43</sup>

The rapid spread of the rugby game throughout Canterbury, which occurred from the mid-1870s, was encouraged by a nascent inclination towards communal rivalry already inherent in local football. In April 1875 Thomas Gordon, secretary of the C.F.C., expressed the hope that some former members of the club then residing at Southbridge 'would ... start a club at once, so that matches might be played with a club there as well as with the newly started clubs at Timaru and Rangiora.'<sup>44</sup> However, it was the manifestation of this proclivity at the interprovincial level which ultimately proved decisive in securing the adoption of rugby rules throughout Canterbury.

Rugby had initially gained a toehold in the Province through the efforts of Alfred St George Hamersley, a solicitor and former captain of England, who was primarily responsible for organising the South Canterbury Football Club in Timaru on 21 April 1875. Although the members of the C.F.C. temporarily acquainted themselves with the rugby code in May 1875, in order to obtain a match against a South Canterbury XV, they were not sufficiently impressed by the experience to make the arrangement permanent. J. O. C. Phillips asserts that

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<sup>43</sup> ODT, 29 August 1878.

<sup>44</sup> LT, 19 April 1875.

rugby was embraced enthusiastically by the urban middle classes because they considered it to be the most effective means of combatting the 'effeminacy' that supposedly afflicted urbanised men, due to their indulgence in 'material luxuries' and sustained contact with women. Rugby would also restore the virility and manliness that many colonial males were allegedly losing in their sedentary occupations.<sup>45</sup> However, the members of the C.F.C. certainly did not feel compelled by any imagined threat to their 'manliness' to choose rugby over the game which they had developed over more than ten years.

The defects which the players of the C.F.C. perceived as inherent in the rugby game stemmed directly from its 'great characteristic', the amount of handling permitted. Any player who picked up the ball was 'collared', after which 'a general scrimmage' ensued. 'Pleasure and science are postponed to fatiguing strain of body and weight of flesh', wrote one observer, 'Time is lost making up the numerous quarrels that of necessity ensue, when the rules are so varied and complex ... and above all, it is exceedingly dangerous and brutal.' Rugby football was pronounced demonstrably inferior to the 'prettiest, most scientific, easiest, and least hazardous... dribbling game' devised and played by the C.F.C.<sup>46</sup>

However, the opportunity to engage an entirely new category of rival induced a rapid change of heart among the sceptical footballers of the C.F.C. In August 1875 the club willingly accepted the offer of a match with an Auckland representative rugby team making a pioneering tour of the colony during the following month. The local side was far more thoroughly and methodically prepared for the match than had been the Christchurch team

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<sup>45</sup> Phillips, *A Man's Country?*, Revised Edition, pp.99-103.

<sup>46</sup> LT, 25 May 1875.

which confronted South Canterbury in May, and it defeated the Aucklanders by nine and one-half points to nil.<sup>47</sup>

The great interest manifested in the game within Christchurch and its environs suggests strongly that it was regarded by many of the inhabitants as a means of expressing civic pride. The *Weekly Press* expressed the hope that 'our players will be regular in their attendance at practice, so as to enable the team which may be selected finally, to come to the contest in good fettle, to uphold the honour of the province.'<sup>48</sup> The provincial government 'acted very liberally in showing honour to our guests, by providing a special carriage [attached to the Lyttelton train] to convey them to and from Christchurch.'<sup>49</sup> On the afternoon of the match 'the Government buildings, banks, and merchants' offices' closed at one o'clock, 'in honor of the game', which attracted 'at least 3000 spectators' to Cranmer Square.<sup>50</sup> The event was reported in such glowing terms that readers could have been forgiven for not realising that the game had been played under the same rules which had proven so deficient in the match between Christchurch and South Canterbury. The actions of various individual players were described as 'exciting', 'splendid' and even 'brilliant'. The *Lyttelton Times* exulted that

The whole match was beautifully played; the greatest fairness and good temper prevailed, and though many a heavy tumble occurred ... not the slightest ill-will was evinced. The spectators ... were well rewarded for their attendance, by witnessing the best match that has ever been played on Cranmer Square.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> A. C. Swan, *History of New Zealand Rugby Football, 1870-1945*, New Zealand Rugby Football Union and A. H. and A. W. Reed, Wellington, 1948, p.42.

<sup>48</sup> WP, 28 August 1875, italics added.

<sup>49</sup> *Press*, 24 September 1875.

<sup>50</sup> *Press*, 22, 25 September 1875.

<sup>51</sup> LT, 25 September 1875.



This game was distinguished from the much maligned fixture held the previous May by the fact that the touring Auckland side represented, in a way that the team from Timaru could not, that external rival against which the 'the honour of the province' must be defended.

The upshot of the victory over Auckland was that it was resolved at the annual meeting of the Christchurch Football Club in March 1876 'that the Rugby Union rules be adopted for the season.'<sup>52</sup> The depth of commitment among footballers throughout Canterbury to the new code was demonstrated by the manner in which the newly formed club in Rangiora co-operated with those in Christchurch and Timaru to organise during 1876 the inaugural tour by a team representing the Province. The Canterbury XV played against Auckland Province, Wellington and Wairarapa Clubs and Nelson Clubs, though bad weather prevented a scheduled match against Taranaki from taking place. The venture was clearly intended to be an expression of civic pride. John Anderson, captain of the C.F.C., stated that

it was the wish of the promoters to send a team such as should thoroughly represent the strength of Canterbury, and not merely "a football team." They already had earned a certain prestige, and they desired to maintain it, not only on their own fields, but, if possible, on those of others.<sup>53</sup>

The success of the tour greatly enhanced the popularity of rugby in the Province. However, for reasons which will be outlined below, it was the prospect of competition with Otago which finally ensured that rugby football would endure in Canterbury.

Rugby enjoyed great support from the elite from its inception in the province. As will be seen, members of the elite offered assistance to Canterbury provincial teams in everything from playing fields, through the organisation of reduced fares when touring the colony, to the

arrangement of a public 'half-holiday' on the occasion of a home game against an opponent from another province such as the Auckland touring team of 1875.

The new game was not universally welcomed or adopted. Christ's College steadfastly retained its own style of football, though it underwent that process of being gradually changed through the integration of selected rules from rugby which had characterised the game of the Christchurch Club before 1875. However, the lure of external competition was so strong that matches were on occasion played under rugby rules. The College played a series of matches in July and August 1878 against the Timaru, Temuka and Oamaru clubs, but the boys were not persuaded to abandon completely their existing code in favour of rugby. Consequently, as a corporate body they were slightly isolated from the community of footballers which burgeoned in Canterbury between 1875 and 1878.<sup>54</sup> However, the College became more active in club competition in Christchurch during the 1880s.<sup>55</sup>

Men from an increasingly diverse range of socio-occupational backgrounds gradually became involved in rugby football as the game spread throughout the Province. The information exhibited in Tables 7-4 to 7-8 indicates that during the late 1870s the majority of players and administrators were drawn from the middling classes, though the urban and rural élites constituted a significant presence in the Christchurch, South Canterbury and North Canterbury clubs. Many had also attended either Christ's College or a public school in England.

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<sup>52</sup> WP, 25 March 1876; LT, 18 March 1876.

<sup>53</sup> WP, 5 August 1876.

<sup>54</sup> LT, 21, 23 August 1878.

<sup>55</sup> LT, 5, 23, 29 June 1882.

The data presented in Table 7.4 indicates that the middling classes maintained their established dominance within the C.F.C. into the 1880s. Sufficient information can be extracted, particularly from the *Electoral Rolls* published in 1880 and 1881, to enable twenty-one of approximately one hundred members to be identified.

**TABLE 7.4**  
**CHRISTCHURCH FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1880<sup>56</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Elites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	1
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	2
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	13*
(b) Semi-professionals	1
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	0
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	3
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*includes one schoolboy

Most of those members who did not appear in the *Rolls*, and therefore could not be identified through that source, were probably absent for the same reasons as many of their counterparts in rowing and athletic clubs. Conversely, while that segment of the membership which remained anonymous may have included persons employed in blue collar occupations, arguments derived from points raised in Appendix A tend to refute any notion that the working classes constituted a more significant presence in the Christchurch F.C. than the data displayed in Table 7.4 would indicate.

<sup>56</sup> LT, various dates, March - September, 1880; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*.

The information displayed in Tables 7.5 to 7.8 indicates that the clubs established in areas of the province outside Christchurch were dominated by farmers. The membership of the South Canterbury Football Club included both runholders and petty rural proprietors. The club also contained a barrister and a sprinkling of clerical workers, perhaps reflecting the connection between the agricultural community and the commercial and financial interests of Timaru.

**TABLE 7.5**  
**SOUTH CANTERBURY FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1876<sup>57</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	4*
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	3
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	5
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*includes one son of a runholder

The Temuka Football Club was dominated by petty rural proprietors engaged primarily in dairy farming. It was a small organisation consisting of fewer than thirty members, a minority of whom were drawn from among the minor officials or shopkeepers in Temuka. The Southbridge F.C. was also built around a core of agriculturalists, most of whom were involved in small to medium scale arable farming. The Southbridge club boasted about two dozen members in 1880. Almost one-half of the members were either minor officials or petty urban proprietors whose premises were located in Southbridge township.

**TABLE 7.6**  
**TEMUKA RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1876<sup>58</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	1*
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	1
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	8
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*son of a runholder

**TABLE 7.7**  
**SOUTHBRIDGE FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1880<sup>59</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	3*
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	7
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	2
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	0
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*includes two schoolboys

As noted above with regard to the Christchurch F.C., the possibility exists that a certain number of those members of the Temuka and Southbridge clubs who cannot be identified were manual workers and consequently did not appear in the available sources.

<sup>57</sup> LT, various dates, March – September, 1876; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*.

<sup>58</sup> TH, various dates, March - September, 1876; MDB, *passim*; *Cyclopedia, Canterbury, passim*..

<sup>59</sup> LT, various dates, March - September, 1880; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*.

However, for the reasons outlined in the case of the C.F.C., and elaborated upon more fully in Appendix A, it is reasonable to believe that the situation which prevailed in the Temuka and Southbridge clubs did not depart from the norm in Canterbury and that there was no significant working class presence in either organisation prior to the early 1880s.

The North Canterbury Football Club was a socially 'mixed' organisation. The membership numbered about thirty in 1880, and was drawn fairly evenly from both the urban and rural sectors. Information extracted from the *Electoral Rolls* enabled practically the entire playing and administrative strength of the North Canterbury club to be identified with precision.

**TABLE 7.8**  
**NORTH CANTERBURY (RANGIORA) FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1880<sup>60</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	9*
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	4
(b) Semi-professionals	2
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	2
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	5
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	2
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	0

\*Includes four sons of W. N. Millton, and two sons of R. Chapman, runholders

The club was situated in Rangiora, a town which was slightly larger than Southbridge or Temuka and served as a rail-head and service centre for the sheep runs of North Canterbury. Reflecting this circumstance, the ranks of the North Canterbury Football Club included

individuals involved in both sheep farming and the financial, transport and commercial industries which supported the large agricultural enterprises of the district.

The process of identifying those who played football in Canterbury after the early 1880s is complicated by the same factor which hinders efforts to determine the characteristics of those involved in the game prior to the mid-1870s. The surnames of individuals selected by each club to play in one of its teams on any given Saturday during the season appeared in the newspapers which were published on the previous Thursday. However, the initials of the nominees were usually omitted from these notices, and also from the subsequent reports of the matches themselves. Thus, while the number of footballers in the Province increased steadily throughout the 1880s, fewer can be identified from that decade than from the years between 1875 and 1880.

The number of players engaged in blue collar occupations remained small throughout the 1870s. Tables 7.4, 7.7 and 7.8 provide further evidence in support of the point made above with regard to the involvement of manual workers in football during the 1870s. Even when sources are available which enable working class men to be identified, research reveals that virtually none feature in the membership lists of football clubs. Rugby in Canterbury started among, and for several years remained the preserve of, the urban elite and middling classes who played and socialised with their own kind. However, a significant working class presence had been established in football by the mid-1880s, principally through the Sydenham, Addington and Linwood clubs.

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<sup>60</sup> LT, various dates, March - September, 1880; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*.

**TABLE 7.9**  
**SYDENHAM RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1883<sup>61</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	0
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	0
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	3
(b) Semi-professionals	0
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	1
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	5
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	12
(b) Semi-skilled	0
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	2

**TABLE 7.10**  
**SYDENHAM RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1888<sup>62</sup>**

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	NUMBER
<b>I: Élites</b>	
(a) Professionals	1
(b) Major rural proprietors	0
(c) Major urban proprietors, managers and officials	1*
<b>II: Middling Classes</b>	
(a) Clerks and Salesmen	4
(b) Semi-professionals	1
(c) Petty rural proprietors and farm managers	11
(d) Petty urban proprietors, managers and officials	1
<b>III: Blue Collar Workers</b>	
(a) Skilled	29
(b) Semi-skilled	1
(c) Unskilled and menial service workers	17

\*includes one Inspector of Police

The growth in the number of proletarian footballers can plausibly be attributed to a variety of factors, all of which may have been significant in the establishment of the Sydenham Rugby Football Club in 1882. Levels of unemployment and underemployment among workers in urban centres rose sharply with the onset of the Long Depression at the end

<sup>61</sup> LT, various dates, March - September, 1883; Sydenham Rugby Football Club Minute Book 1882-1889, Box 2, Item 2, MS ARC1993.27, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch; Electoral Rolls, 1878-9, 1879-80, 1880-1, *passim*, Freeholders Return, *passim*.

<sup>62</sup> LT, various dates, March - September, 1888; Sydenham Rugby Football Club Minute Book 1882-1889, Electoral Rolls, 1887, *passim*.



of 1879.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, the amount of (unsolicited) leisure time available to many labouring men increased markedly. The vigorous campaign which was waged in Sydenham from the early 1880s to restrict the sale of alcohol by limiting the number of licences issued suggests that 'probably a majority'<sup>64</sup> of people in the Borough were concerned that idle men might attempt to alleviate their boredom in the pub. A number of petty proprietors and other individuals such as George Mason, an accountant, and William Allardyce, a bookbinder, evidently considered that playing football would provide men and youths with a healthy and 'manly' alternative to the hotel as a means of keeping warm in Winter. Thus, utilising local halls as clubrooms, they established the Sydenham rugby club.<sup>65</sup> Working class males were often eager to join clubs such as the Sydenham Rugby Football Club as the prestige attached to inter-provincial football, and the esteem in which the Canterbury representative team was held by the wider community, grew apace after 1880.

From 1875 football in Canterbury was distinguished by a rapid growth in the number of clubs and the increasing formality of its organisation, a process which culminated in the formation of the C.R.F.U. in July 1879. The competition which during former years had centred on Christ's College and the Christchurch Club was supplanted by another involving a steadily growing number of formally constituted clubs located at various places throughout the Province. Within Christchurch the famous Merivale Football Club was formed in 1877, the Eastern and Opawa clubs in 1878, the Sydenham Youths, Avonville and Cambridge clubs in 1879, and the Southern and Bingsland clubs in 1880. Rugby also spread rapidly throughout the smaller towns and hamlets of Canterbury. The Timaru and Temuka clubs were established in

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<sup>63</sup> C.G.F. Simkin, *The Instability of a Dependent Economy: Economic Fluctuations in New Zealand, 1840-1914*, Oxford University Press, London, 1951, pp.165-6; Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III*: pp.60-1.

<sup>64</sup> Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III*, p.126.

<sup>65</sup> Both Mason and Allardyce were enthusiastic and capable administrators who served for many years on the committee of the Canterbury R.F.U. George Mason served as vice-president of the C.R.F.U. from 1896 to 1909 and as president in 1910, and as president of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union in 1913 and 1915; R. H. Chester, N. A. C. Macmillan and R. A. Palenski, *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand Rugby*, Second Edition, Moa Publications, Auckland, 1987, p.213.

1875, the Waimate, Rakaia, North Canterbury (Rangiora) and Kaiapoi clubs in 1876, those at Southbridge and Leeston in 1877, the Ashburton and South Rakaia clubs in 1878, and the Cust and Amberley clubs in 1880. A number of major clubs were founded over the next few years including Sydenham in 1882, Addington and Canterbury College in 1883, and Linwood in 1886. Several of these organisations, such as Avonville and Opawa, did not endure. Nevertheless, the degree of permanence among clubs was sufficiently high to enable sustained competition to emerge throughout Canterbury.<sup>66</sup>

Two distinct sets of rivalries gradually emerged within Canterbury after 1880. The Christchurch Club remained the axis around which football turned in the city, constituting the centre of a metropolitan competition which had expanded by 1890 to include the Sydenham, Addington, Canterbury College, East Christchurch and Merivale clubs. The North Canterbury Football Club from Rangiora, and the Leeston and Southbridge clubs from Ellesmere were also actively involved in urban competition until the late 1880s.<sup>67</sup>

However, contact between those clubs located in Christchurch and the north of the Province and the smaller organisations being established in South Canterbury, which had been minimal before 1880, dwindled to negligible proportions thereafter.<sup>68</sup> Thus, the footballers of Timaru, Temuka, Geraldine, Waimate and Winchester were increasingly left to organise a competition among themselves. Some intense local rivalries developed as early as 1878. Games between the South Canterbury and Temuka clubs were for some years noted for their foul play and 'roughness'.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Swan, *History of New Zealand Rugby Football*, pp.38-43, 62-5, 69-70, 77-8, 82; LT, 25 July 1876; 6 April, 8 June 1877; 8 May 1878.

<sup>67</sup> LT, 24 May, 17 July 1876, 7, 25 May, 11 June, 20, 31 July, 21 August, 17 September 1877; 24 May, 1 July, 1, 26 August, 3, 5 September 1878; 5 May, 16 June 1879; 8 February, 29 May, 19, 26 June, 6 July 1882; WP, 21 July, 25 August, 22 September 1877; 25 May, 22 June 1878; 16 August 1879; 19 June 1880.

<sup>68</sup> TH, 23 May 1882; 25 August 1885; 25 May, 21 June 1886.

<sup>69</sup> LT, 12 July 1877; WP, 19 July 1879.

The development of rivalries, both between Canterbury and 'external' opponents and within the Province itself, was facilitated by several factors. The first was a mechanism which enhanced the prospect of any match finishing with a decisive result. Under the rules formulated by the R.F.U. in England prior to 1886, a match could only be won by means of goals scored from either a drop-kick attempted in open play or a place-kick taken after a player had managed to touch the ball down behind the goal line defended by his opponents.<sup>70</sup> A far more comprehensive system of scoring quickly took shape in Canterbury. This innovation greatly increased the chances of producing winners and losers, thus providing supporters of rival teams with a better prospect of obtaining a decisive result. The catalyst for this development was provided in 1875 by the touring Aucklanders who, 'to avoid the vexation of a drawn match', proposed to their prospective opponents the award of six points for a goal, two points for a touch-down and 'half-a-point' for a 'force-down' in defence.<sup>71</sup> The outcomes of subsequent interprovincial matches were decided by points, though until 1880 the precise scale of values was frequently a matter for negotiation between the contending parties.<sup>72</sup> The convention of scoring by points rather than simply by goals spread throughout Canterbury at a measured pace, being applied first in those matches which intercommunal rivalry imbued with the greatest competitive significance. Within two years of having become established in Canterbury rugby football had acquired a system of scoring far more sophisticated than anything envisaged by the Rugby Football Union for another decade.<sup>73</sup>

The heavy training schedule imposed on the Canterbury representative team reflected the importance of rugby as a source of provincial pride. From the time of the first

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<sup>70</sup> J. Macrory, *Running With The Ball: The Birth of Rugby Football*, Collins Willow, London, 1991, p.115; Swan, *History of New Zealand Rugby Football*, pp.27-8.

<sup>71</sup> LT, 24 September 1875.

<sup>72</sup> Swan, *History of New Zealand Rugby Football*, p.87; NZH, 1 September 1876; WP, 2 September 1876, 18 August 1877.

‘representative’ matches in 1875 players trained assiduously in pursuit of victory, at least partly in response to pressure from the wider community that they do so.<sup>74</sup> Those selected to represent Canterbury could be expected to train every weekday at 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. for a month before an important match. Players who failed to attend the prescribed training sessions were publicly rebuked through the columns and letters pages of the local newspapers, and were even told ‘to remember that unless they practice regularly they will have a very small chance of being selected’ for the team.<sup>75</sup> The published reports of most of the representative games played by Canterbury throughout the period suggest that the players in question responded positively to such admonitions. The degree of commitment exhibited by those selected to play for the Province was similar to that demonstrated by players in Wales and the North of England, where pressure to represent the community with distinction bred a similarly competitive ethos. Moreover, the vigour of their efforts to defend the ‘honour of the Province’ was sufficient to attract considerable support from among the general populace. However, until the mid-1880s, Canterbury teams in general were prevented by the unimaginative methods in which they were drilled from achieving a measure of success commensurate with their labours.<sup>76</sup>

Training at the level of club football consisted primarily of regular practice games, though during the early years this was usually restricted to the ‘scratch’ matches which the members of each of the various clubs played amongst themselves on most Saturdays.<sup>77</sup> Very rarely were attempts made to organise special practices on weekdays for teams involved in matches below the interprovincial category.<sup>78</sup> Two factors might explain this apparent

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<sup>73</sup> WP, 27 May, 22, 29 July, 16 September 1876; LT, 24, 29 May, 17 July, 12 September 1876; 7 May, 11 June 1877.

<sup>74</sup> WP, 18 August 1877.

<sup>75</sup> LT, 25, 29 July, 5, 19 August 1878; 9 August 1879.

<sup>76</sup> LT, 25, 29 August 1879; TH, 27 July 1885; Swan, *History of New Zealand Rugby Football*, pp.89-91, 94-5, 98-9, 104.

<sup>77</sup> LT, 25 July 1878; 8 October 1879.

<sup>78</sup> LT, 12 May 1876; 5, 9 July 1877.

reluctance to engage in intensive training. The first is that prolonged and serious training had never been expected of players at the C.F.C. before the adoption of rugby rules. Secondly, rugby had not yet attained a degree of complexity sufficient to require players to devote extended periods to repetitious exercise in the skills required in specialised positions. However, Phil Murray observes that by the mid-1880s 'players were more prepared to practice and [ready] themselves for matches'. In 1884 the members of the Sydenham Football Club trained throughout the summer in order to be properly fit for the approaching season.<sup>79</sup> It seems reasonable to suggest that this change in attitude toward training was induced by a gradual intensification of competitive pressures, as the identities of the various clubs crystallised and the 'pride' taken by each in its reputation began to grow.

Rapidly improving communication networks facilitated the development of both interprovincial rugby rivalry and a sense of provincial identity. From the mid-1870s the ports of Onehunga, New Plymouth, Wellington, Nelson, Lyttelton and Port Chalmers were connected by a regular scheduled steamship service. The possibilities offered by a reliable system of steam navigation were quickly recognised by those anxious to promote a sporting rivalry between the provinces. The pioneering tourists from Auckland travelled the colony on a variety of vessels owned by the recently formed Union Steamship Company in September 1875, as did the first touring team despatched by Canterbury in 1876. The Dunedin F.C. was able to take even greater advantage of the new mode of transport when organising its tour in 1877. James Mills, founder of the Union Steamship Company, not only arranged discounted fares for the entire party but also earned its thanks 'for his courtesy in having detained the steamer Taranaki at the different ports at which the team called'.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> P. Murray, 'The Origins and Development of Rugby in Christchurch, 1860-1885', MA extended essay, University of Canterbury, 1983 p.36.

Teams touring by steamship operated under certain constraints. Seasickness became an occupational hazard for the itinerant footballer.<sup>81</sup> Rough weather sometimes created insurmountable difficulties for touring teams which attempted to land in New Plymouth, much to the chagrin of the locals.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, arrivals and departures, and the consequent timing and duration of matches, were largely dictated by the tides. Thus, the preparations for more than one interprovincial match were 'upset by the steamboat arrangements'.<sup>83</sup>

The network of railways, which burgeoned throughout the South Island during the 1870s and 1880s, facilitated the development of the rivalries which effectively ensured that rugby football would endure in Canterbury. A sporting rivalry based on cricket had existed between Canterbury and Otago since 1863. From September 1878 the railway provided a rapid and reliable means of communication between Christchurch and Dunedin, the provincial 'capitals'. Judge Alexander Bathgate believed that using the new means of conveyance to facilitate the arrangement of regular football matches would simultaneously encourage interprovincial competition and the development of closer relations between the Provinces. 'The local lines of demarcation between Canterbury and Otago', he told an audience in August 1878, '[have] been demolished, and the railway now knits together the interests of the two, while such matches as these of the time honoured game of football [do] their part in knitting men together in one mind and spirit.' Alfred Hamersley concurred with Bathgate and added that he 'hoped to see the rivalry in cricket and football remain between Otago and Canterbury.' A. C. Neilson responded by promising that 'now that railway communication was established, he would do his best towards initiating a home and away match every year.'<sup>84</sup> Thus, by

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<sup>80</sup> ODT, 9, 1 September 1877.

<sup>81</sup> ODT, 17 August 1877; LT, 15 August 1877.

<sup>82</sup> LT, 4 September 1876.

<sup>83</sup> LT, 25 September 1875.

<sup>84</sup> ODT, 29 August 1878.

mutual agreement between the Canterbury Rugby Football Union and Otago Rugby Football Union the rugby match between Canterbury and Otago became an annual event from 1880.<sup>85</sup>

The comprehensive network of railways theoretically increased the opportunities for players from all parts of the province to be selected for representative teams, though footballers from clubs outside Christchurch rarely took the field for Canterbury prior to the mid-1880s. In May 1878 the C.F.C., which as the senior club in the province organised all Canterbury teams prior to the establishment of the Canterbury Rugby Football Union, proposed 'in order to obtain a thoroughly representative team ... to divide the Province into two sections' at the Rangitata River. After a series of matches was played between the various clubs in each division, and subsequently between teams representing North and South Canterbury, a final fifteen was selected for the game against Otago.<sup>86</sup> The delegates of the clubs present at the establishment of the Canterbury Rugby Football Union in July 1879 asked almost sixty players from clubs scattered throughout the Province to practise in their home areas 'as much as possible, as the Canterbury representatives will most probably be chosen from amongst them to play in the forthcoming matches against Wellington and Otago.'<sup>87</sup>

The development of the railways greatly improved the prospects for interaction between the urban clubs involved in the metropolitan competition and those located outside Christchurch, and also between the various smaller clubs in South Canterbury. Despite the improvements in transport, the clubs of South Canterbury increasingly felt disadvantaged by their distance from the main centre of rugby 'power', Christchurch. As their own network of clubs expanded, they felt sufficiently emboldened to establish an independent Union. On 8 March 1888 thirteen delegates representing the South Canterbury, Pirates, Temuka, Geraldine,

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<sup>85</sup> WP, 3 July 1880; ODT, 30 August 1880.

<sup>86</sup> LT, 9 May 1878.

Waimate, Fairlie Creek and Winchester Football Clubs met at the offices of Hamersley and Wood in Timaru and established the South Canterbury Rugby Football Union<sup>88</sup> The architects of the new Union wished to 'see the district better represented' in the 'intercolonial' rivalry which was beginning to develop with New South Wales during the 1880s, and in 'inter-Rugby Union and other first class matches, a privilege to which we have hitherto been strangers'.<sup>89</sup> 'Dissatisfaction' with the manner in which representative teams, though selected by the Canterbury Rugby Football Union, were drawn 'almost exclusively' from the C.F.C. had been expressed by the South Canterbury Football Club as early as 1881.<sup>90</sup> The rate at which players from South Canterbury were selected for representative honours does not appear to have improved at all during the seven years which passed between this expression of discontent and the formation of the South Canterbury Rugby Football Union<sup>91</sup> In fact, after 1880 the clubs of South Canterbury maintained stronger relationships with their counterparts in North Otago than they did with those in Christchurch and north of the Province.<sup>92</sup> Thus, the tacit exclusion of a group of clubs from one set of rivalries resulted in the formation of another series within that circle.

Rugby also received extensive, and profitable, support from the liquor trade. Almost every club in the Province was established in a hotel, subsequently exploiting its facilities to obtain both an administrative base and a means of fostering the 'social dimension' which was 'central ... to the initial appeal of the game.'<sup>93</sup> Visiting teams were, if necessary, greeted at the local railway station or wharf, escorted to a 'luncheon' at the hotel patronised by the local club

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<sup>87</sup> LT, 30 July 1879.

<sup>88</sup> TH, 9 March 1888.

<sup>89</sup> TH, 9, 16 March 1888; Murray, 'The Origins and Development of Rugby in Christchurch, 1860-1885', p.31.

<sup>90</sup> TH, 17 March 1881.

<sup>91</sup> R. H. Chester and N. A. C. Macmillan, *The Visitors: A History of International Rugby Teams in New Zealand*, Moa Publications Ltd., Auckland, 1990, pp.21, 27-8, 41-2; Swan, *History of New Zealand Rugby Football*, plate opp. p.64.

<sup>92</sup> TH, 16 June 1881; 26, 30 June 1882; 16 June 1884; 9 March 1888.

<sup>93</sup> Phillips, *A Man's Country?*, p.94.



and conveyed thereafter to the ground. Alternately, the visitors might progress directly to the field of play, being feted thereafter at a dinner prepared in their honour at the hostelry. Landlords might also provide 'refreshments' at half-time.

The C.F.C. relocated its meetings and social functions to the Commercial Hotel in 1875, while the headquarters of the Eastern club were initially at 'Hall's Eastern Hotel, corner of Cashel street and the East belt' and later at Collins' Hotel which was conveniently sited on the southern side of Latimer Square.<sup>94</sup> Clubs established in other towns also relied heavily on local hotels. The South Canterbury Football Club originally used the Club Hotel in Timaru, transferring its patronage to the much more capacious Grosvenor in April 1879. The Temuka Football Club was founded in May 1875 at the Crown Hotel in Temuka, and held its meetings variously at the Caledonian and Royal Hotels. Hotels were similarly utilised by the clubs formed in Rangiora, Amberley, Ashburton and Southbridge.<sup>95</sup>

A particularly strong relationship developed between football club and hotel in the hamlet of Leeston. The Leeston Football Club was founded at a meeting held in 'Mr Loe's Leeston Hotel,' with Mr Albert Loe in the chair. This same gentleman was elected President of the club while his brother, J. J. Loe, served as Treasurer. Albert Loe 'placed a portion of the cricket field at the disposal of the Club', which 'accepted with thanks.'<sup>96</sup> Thus the Leeston Football Club acquired a portion of a paddock adjoining the hotel. Visiting teams were able to enjoy 'an excellent luncheon' at the Leeston Hotel before strolling a few yards to their 'decidedly energetic' encounter with the Leeston Football Club, all courtesy of the philanthropic Albert Loe.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> LT, 27 August 1875; 17, 18 March, 18 September 1876; 12 March 1877; 17 July 1878; 8 October 1879.

<sup>95</sup> LT, 20 May 1878; 18 April, 6 May 1879; 8, 13 May 1882; TH, 17 March 1881; 29 March 1884; 12 April 1886.

<sup>96</sup> LT, 8 June 1877.

<sup>97</sup> WP, 22 June 1878.

The cross-class appeal of rugby was enhanced by the fact that most matches of any significance, including many interprovincial fixtures until the early 1880s, were held in public spaces to which admission could not legally be charged. The C.F.C. continued to occupy Cranmer Square until at least 1889, while Latimer Square served as the 'home ground' of the Eastern Football Club from 1878. Likewise, football in the outlying areas of the province remained free of what Dunning and Sheard refer to in the English context as 'monetization'. Matches were generally played on municipal grounds or in paddocks which, through an act of donation by their owners, became 'de facto' public spaces for the duration of the event.<sup>98</sup>

However, a significant precedent was set in 1879 with the advent of 'monetization' in metropolitan football. Three interprovincial games were played in Canterbury during that season on an enclosed ground to which spectators had to pay for admission. All were staged in the paddock of John Anderson, iron founder of Cashel St., Christchurch, whose son had appeared for Scotland in 1873 and was captain of the Canterbury team throughout the late 1870s. The proceeds from these matches were devoted only to defraying the expenses incurred by the recently-formed Canterbury Rugby Football Union in arranging them.<sup>99</sup> Such episodes remained exceptional prior to the late 1880s. Even when the 'private' enclosed ground was constructed at Lancaster Park in 1881, the rugby played there was restricted almost entirely to occasional games between the leading urban clubs and opponents from elsewhere in the Province and to the few interprovincial matches played 'at home' by Canterbury each season. Thus, the public was assured of free access to the overwhelming majority of rugby fixtures arranged within Canterbury.

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<sup>98</sup> WP, 27 May 1875; 29 July 1876; 21 April 1877; 25 May 1878; 24 May 1879; LT, 15 April, 4 August 1879; 19 July 1880.

<sup>99</sup> LT, 12, 25, 26 August 1879.

The attention paid by the public to football matches increased dramatically from 1875. Games involving interprovincial rivals naturally proved the most attractive. During the late 1870s and early 1880s Canterbury played home games against Otago, Auckland and Wellington before crowds of between one thousand and five thousand spectators.<sup>100</sup> Fixtures which gave practical expression to rivalry between the larger clubs could also attract crowds of considerable size. Though they declined in frequency after 1879, matches between the Christchurch Football Club and the South Canterbury club drew attendances of between one thousand and two thousand persons.<sup>101</sup> Other matches between the clubs from Christchurch, Timaru and Temuka were also watched by 'a large number of people ... impatient to see the "fun," as a Rugby Union game really is to the spectators, however different it may be to the combatants.'<sup>102</sup> Because the reports which appeared in newspapers seldom contained numerical totals of spectators, it is effectively impossible to state exactly how many people attended most games. Nevertheless, the available evidence suggests strongly that rugby football enjoyed strong support among the general population in Canterbury.

By the early 1880s a close connection was developing in Canterbury between a maturing sense of provincial identity and the fortunes of the representative rugby team. A rivalry with Otago, based on cricket, had existed since 1863. However, the inherent lack of exciting action in the game and the inability of most people to obtain sufficient time away from work to watch an entire match effectively ensured that inter-provincial cricket would attract only a limited following. By contrast, rugby matches were characterised by intense physical activity and rapid movement, were of relatively short duration and could be staged at frequent intervals. Thus, within a few years of its being introduced, rugby acquired a strong following in Canterbury and rapidly thereafter became the principal means of conducting the

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<sup>100</sup> WP, 25 September 1875; 9 August 1877; 29 August 1879; TH, 27 July, 31 August 1885.

<sup>101</sup> WP, 27 May 1876; LT, 24 May 1878; TH, 24 May 1878.

sporting rivalry with Otago and, later, with other provinces. Those selected for representative teams were motivated by 'provincial pride' to adopt a 'professional' approach to training and, from the mid-1880s, in the development of new techniques and styles of play associated with an increasing tendency toward positional specialisation. If the manner in which football developed in Canterbury is any guide to the evolution of the game throughout the Colony during this period, the intensification of rivalries fostered the growth of 'professional' attitudes toward the preparation of teams and a rapid and continuing rise in standards of physical fitness and levels of skill. The calibre of football wrought by this process of improvement was eventually revealed to the world by the All Black touring team of 1905-6.

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<sup>102</sup> LT, 24 May 1876; 25 May 1877; TH, 25 June 1877.

## *CONCLUSION*

Readers will by now have some understanding of how the Honorable Mr Clifford could come to be so astonished at finding the colony in general, and Canterbury in particular, 'so far advanced in sports' in 1879. One of the principal findings of this study, as detailed in Tables C-1 to C-4, is that organised sport in Canterbury rose from relative insignificance in the early 1850s to become a phenomenon of considerable magnitude by 1890. From the mid-1860s the number of rowing and cricket clubs formed, and of rural sports meetings, regattas and ploughing matches held each year, in various districts of Canterbury increased steadily. By the later 1870s several durable football clubs, and a couple of sizeable amateur athletic clubs, had also been established. Thereafter, with the notable exceptions of rural sports and ploughing matches, the expansion of organised sport proceeded apace.

The marked increase in the number of rugby football and, to a lesser extent, cricket clubs being established during the late 1870s and 1880s suggests a change in the nature of sporting activity. 'Festive' events arranged on an annual basis were apparently being superseded by regular competition at short intervals between teams representing particular localities.

**TABLE C.1**  
**SELECTED SPORTING ACTIVITY CONDUCTED IN CANTERBURY 1861-2**

MONTH	AQUATICS	ATHLETICS	PLOUGHING MATCHES	CRICKET	FOOTBALL
OCTOBER	Casual competition			<b>Season opens</b>	
NOVEMBER				Three Clubs:	
DECEMBER		<u>Rural Sports:</u> Akaroa		mainly	
JANUARY	<u>Regattas:</u> Lyttelton Akaroa	<u>Rural Sports:</u> Kaiapoi		intra-club	
FEBRUARY				matches	
MARCH	<b>Season closes</b>			<b>Season closes</b>	
APRIL					<b>Season opens</b>
MAY					Christ's College;
JUNE					Town v. College
JULY					X2
AUGUST					
SEPTEMBER	<b>Season opens</b>		Canterbury P&A Assn Mt Grey District Kowai; Mt Victoria		<b>Season closes</b>

**TABLE C.2**  
**SELECTED SPORTING ACTIVITY CONDUCTED IN CANTERBURY 1870-1**

MONTH	AQUATICS	ATHLETICS	PLOUGHING MATCHES	CRICKET	FOOTBALL
OCTOBER	Canterbury & Union R.C. - intra-club; Cure B.C. & others, training for regattas			<b>Season opens</b>	
NOVEMBER				five Clubs:	
DECEMBER	<u>Regattas:</u> Kaiapoi Christchurch	<u>Rural Sports:</u> Christchurch Leithfield		intra-club matches	
JANUARY	<u>Regattas:</u> Lyttelton Akaroa	<u>Rural Sports:</u> Rangiora Woodend Doyleston		plus occasional inter-club match	
FEBRUARY	<u>Regattas:</u> Heathcote				
MARCH	<b>Season closes</b>			<b>Season closes</b>	
APRIL					<b>Season opens</b>
MAY					Chritchurch F.C. had between 130- 150 players
JUNE			Kaiapoi		intra-club;
JULY			Sefton; Templeton Rangiora		Christ's College - intra-club;
AUGUST			Ellesmere; Lincoln Courtenay; Malvern Moeraki Downs Ashley		<b>C.F.C. vs College,</b> <b>x3-4 matches;</b> Timaru F.C.; intra-club
SEPTEMBER	<b>Season opens</b>		Champion; Hororata Port Victoria; Selwyn		<b>Season closes</b>

**TABLE C.3**  
**SELECTED SPORTING ACTIVITY CONDUCTED IN CANTERBURY 1879-80**

MONTH	AQUATICS	ATHLETICS	PLOUGHING MATCHES	CRICKET	FOOTBALL
OCTOBER	Canterbury & Union R.C. - inter-club and intra-club competition;				
NOVEMBER	Cure B.C. - intra-club	Rural Sports: Midmont; Friendly Societies (Cust)		Amuri C.C.,	
DECEMBER	<u>Regatta:</u> Timaru	Rural Sports: Friendly Societies (Chch); Coalgate-Glentunnel; Ohoka-Eyreton; French Farm; Christchurch; Kowai Pass; Pleasant Point; Leithfield; Waterton		Temuka C.C. - intra-club matches	
JANUARY	<u>Regattas:</u> Lyttelton; Akaroa	Rural Sports: Ellesmere; Kaiapoi; Winslow; Lincoln; Oxford Sheffield; Kaikoura  <u>Caledonian:</u> Waimate; Timaru		United CCC - intra-club (A & B teams) plus inter-club matches	
FEBRUARY					
MARCH	<u>Regatta:</u> Heathcote	Rural Sports: Oxford Friendly Societies; Volunteer Military (Chch)		Midland CCC	
APRIL	<u>Regatta:</u> Kaiapoi  Season closes	Rural Sports: Sunnyside Asylum		Season closes	Season opens Competition: <b>Intra-club</b> matches Inter-club – matches involving nine-clubs
MAY		<u>Annual Sports:</u> Canterbury AAC; South Canterbury AAC			organised by C.R.F.U.;
JUNE					
JULY			Kaiapoi; Papanui		Interprovincial matches
AUGUST					
SEPTEMBER	Season opens			Season opens	Season closes

**TABLE C.4**  
**CLUBS ACTIVE IN SELECTED SPORTS IN CANTERBURY 1860-1890**

SPORT	Est. 1861-1870	Est. 1871-1880	Est. 1881-90
AQUATICS	Canterbury R.C. (1862- ) Union R.C. (1864- ) Cure B.C. (1866- ) Kaiapoi B.C. (1864-70) Lyttelton B.C. (1864-74) Planet R.C. (1864-1865) Akaroa B.C. (1864-?) Avon R.C.* (1868-?)	Lyttelton Trades B.C. (1870-72) Timaru B.C. (1876- ) Heathcote R.C. (1870-79) Christchurch B.C. (1875) Telegraph B.C. (1875-77)	Canterbury College B.C. (18--) Avon R.C.* (1881- )
ATHLETICS		Canterbury A.A.C. (1871-77) Canterbury A.A.C. 1880-1912) South Canterbury A.A.C. (1871-1908)	
CRICKET	Christchurch C.C. (1851-66) United C.C.C. (1866- ) Albion C.C. (1861-6) Albion C.C. 1867-68) Timaru C.C. (1862- )	Amuri C.C. (1875- ) Midland C.C.C. (1870-1905) Woolston C.C. (187?- )	Geraldine (c.1880- ) Temuka (c.1880- ) Waimate (c.1880- ) Lancaster Park C.C. (1881- ) Addington (1882- ) Sydenham C.C. (1881- ) [Note 1: Approximately twenty 'suburban' teams playing informally in Christchurch from approximately 1880.]
FOOTBALL	Christchurch F.C. (1863-) Lyttelton F.C. (1864-67) Lyttelton F.C. 1870-73) Christ's College (1862-)	Heathcote F.C. (1872) South Canterbury F.C. (1870-88 - <i>Thereafter</i> Timaru F.C.) North Canterbury F.C. (1875; Rugby rules from 1876) Temuka F.C. (1875- ) South Rakaia F.C. (1876- ) Merivale F.C. (1877- 79) Merivale F.C. (1881-1999) Leeston F.C. (1877- ) Southbridge F.C. (1877- ) Ashburton F.C. (1878- ) Eastern F.C. (1878- ) Amberley F.C. (1879- ) Sydenham Youths F.C. (1879-82) Avonville F.C. (1879-80)	Bingsland (1880-188?) Southern (1880- ) Ravens (1881-188?) East Christchurch (1881 - ?) Geraldine (1881- ?) Waimate (1881- ) Akaroa F.C. (1882- ?) Sydenham F.C. (1882- ) Fendalton F.C. (1882- ?) Oxford F.C. (1882- ?) Canterbury College F.C. (1883- ) Addington (1883-1913) Winslow (1884- ?) Fairlie Creek F.C. (1884- ?) Kaiapoi F.C. (1884- ) Little River F.C. (1885- ?) French Farm F.C. (1885- ?)

\*Entirely different organisations

Note 1: For details see G. Ryan, "When the Game was Played by Decent Chaps": The Making of New Zealand Cricket, 1832-1914", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996, p.214.

The development of sport in colonial Canterbury was facilitated by a number of factors. Apart from a range of mountains at its western extremity and some swamps situated in low-lying coastal areas in the east, the province consisted primarily of an alluvial plain which was highly conducive to the expansion of systems of communication and to the construction of facilities. Only the large rivers through which the Plain had initially been formed constituted serious barriers to the development of sport. However, the most



significant of these natural obstacles had been traversed by permanent railway bridges by the early 1870s.

The increasingly comprehensive network of railways, which expanded rapidly from the late 1860s, also facilitated the development of sport in the province. On the days on which major sporting events were held the management of the railways enhanced the ability of the general population to become involved by increasing the frequency of services and offering heavily discounted fares. Those in charge of the railways also encouraged the growth of active participation in sport by frequently carrying the boats of those competing at regattas free of charge.

Rail transport enhanced social development in this instance because the gatherings to which a considerable proportion of the populace were being carried occurred in close proximity to one another and within a period of three months each summer, thereby constituting an informal 'circuit' of sporting events. Jennifer Barclay claims that the 'momentary unity' which occurs within a group during the course of any 'sporting contact' may become 'more solid and permanent'<sup>1</sup> if that activity is conducted on a regular basis at short intervals. The liberal use of an extensive and expanding rail system provided ample opportunities for just such a frequent interaction to occur every year between thousands of Cantabrians.

Economic development was also a crucial factor in the growth of sport in Canterbury. The returns received by farmers for exports of wheat and wool from the early 1860s, and for refrigerated meat after 1882, provided the cash required to finance sports meetings,

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<sup>1</sup> J. Barclay, 'An Analysis of Trends in New Zealand Sport From 1840 to 1900', B.A. (Hons) extended essay, Massey University, 1977, pp.24, 50-1.

ploughing matches, and later football and cricket clubs in rural areas of the province. Capital accumulated largely through the processing of primary products and the provision of transport, financial and other services to the farming population of the hinterland facilitated the expansion of all manner of sport in Christchurch, the principal urban centre. Sufficient resources were available in the city by the mid-1860s to inaugurate and sustain impressive regattas and athletic sports meetings and, from the early 1870s, growing numbers of properly constituted cricket, football and amateur athletic clubs.

The last of the major factors which facilitated the development of sport in Canterbury was the rapid increase in the population which occurred after 1860 and, in particular, during the 1870s when the assisted immigration schemes operated by the general and provincial governments were bringing unprecedented numbers of people to the colony. The population of the province expanded from approximately three thousand in 1851 to almost 130,000 in 1891, while that of Christchurch grew over the same period from little more than one thousand people to nearly fifty thousand.

However, the crucial determinants in the development of sport in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890 were the organising activities of the élites and the enthusiasm of substantial segments of the middling classes, especially white collar employees. The arrangement of regattas depended heavily upon the efforts of urban élites, while clerks and salesmen formed the backbone of the rowing clubs in Christchurch prior to 1890. The élites and middling classes also played vital roles in the conduct of track and field athletics in all its manifestations. The committees responsible for the management of sports meetings in rural areas consisted primarily of members of the local élites and petty urban and rural proprietors. In urban areas the administration of pedestrian contests, the gatherings arranged by Friendly

and Caledonian Societies, amateur athletic clubs and the Popular Sports (in Christchurch) remained firmly in the hands of the élites and the upper echelons of the middling classes. The membership of the amateur clubs was drawn in fairly equal proportions from the urban and rural élites, on one hand, and the urban middling classes, especially those employed in white collar occupations, on the other. Cricket and football survived in Canterbury prior to 1880, and developed strongly thereafter, due principally to the energy expended in organising them by the élites and the enthusiasm of players drawn from all segments of the middling classes.

The élites and middling classes were inclined to support the development of sport in the province for several reasons. The Britain from which the 'Canterbury Pilgrims' departed, as many scholars have articulated, was caught up in a 'sports revolution'<sup>2</sup> and there is no doubt that they brought the revolution with them. However, the reasons expounded by British sports historians such as Holt, Bailey, Wigglesworth and Cunningham,<sup>3</sup> for this revolution, are not transferable to Canterbury.

Sport was almost certainly not a device utilised by entrepreneurs in order to make a profit for, in the absence of a gold rush or a numerous industrial working class, there was little to be made. It was clear to any observer by the mid-1870s that promoters could expect to make minimal returns from pedestrianism. The few publicans who made money from sporting activity did so through the provision of catering services to the organisers of regattas and athletic sports gatherings.

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<sup>2</sup> R. Cashman, *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, p.3.

<sup>3</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989P; Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1987; N. Wigglesworth, *A Social History of English Rowing*, Frank Cass and Company Limited, London, 1992; H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c. 1780-c. 1880*, Croom Helm Ltd., London, 1980.

No evidence has emerged that sport was used by any group for the purpose of social improvement. Indeed, the socially exclusive nature of early clubs as indicated by their membership lists, and the complete lack of concern at this cliquishness prior to the end of the 1870s, proves conclusively that sporting activity was not designed to promote the 'moral elevation' of the working classes. The only major exception to this rule was the Sydenham Rugby Club, which was founded in 1882.

It is also extremely unlikely that sport was utilised as a means of social control. The circumstances in which sport was allegedly used for such purposes - massive urbanisation and the emergence of a large and potentially unruly industrial proletariat - did not exist in Canterbury. Nevertheless, the province was afflicted by problems of crime and drunkenness and the élites and middling classes do not appear to have been inclined to make an effort to save the socially 'atomised' through sport. The disorder which occurred as a consequence of 'atomisation' may have appeared less threatening to the owners of property in Canterbury than class-based revolution appeared to their counterparts in Britain. Moreover, the élites and middling classes in Canterbury may have regarded the use of sport as a mechanism for 'social control' to have been addressed to the problems of the 'old world', from which they felt their 'new society' to be free. It is also possible that, until the late 1880s, the upper levels of the social hierarchy were blinded to real problems of social order by the myths of the 'ideal society'.

The involvement of the élites and middling classes in the organisation and development of sport in Canterbury was probably actuated by a number of considerations. The settlement of Canterbury proceeded at a moderate pace during the 1850s and began to accelerate sharply during the 1860s. By this time a sporting culture had developed among the

British middle classes which was related to the moral and physical development of the individual and largely detached from any concern with the social improvement or social control of the 'lower orders', or the desire for profit. Thus, between 1851 and 1870 Canterbury acquired a cadre of sporting enthusiasts who wished to preserve their sporting pleasures in the new environment and set about doing so once the size of the population, improvements in the transport system and economic development facilitated such action. Men of this variety, including J. E. FitzGerald, C. R. Blakiston, R. J. S. Harman and Henry Sewell, organised all of the principal cricket, rowing, football and amateur athletic clubs established in Canterbury before the mid-1870s.

Other motives, not directly related to sport, may also have induced many men to become involved in the management of sporting activities. 'Sporting festivals', such as regattas and annual athletic sports meetings, brought occasional variety and entertainment to the life of the community. Men gained considerable prestige by organising these events, and sometimes developed connections which proved useful in other spheres of endeavour. However, the organisers of some sporting festivals, such as those run by the Friendly and Caledonian Societies, were not motivated by any thoughts of private or commercial gain. Rather, they were impelled by the desire to raise funds to cover the costs of education, social welfare or cultural enrichment. These individuals simply exploited, for the purposes of charity, that need for entertainment which existed in both urban centres and isolated pioneering communities throughout Canterbury.

Domination by the élites and middling classes had a number of consequences for the development of sport in Canterbury. The first of these was the widespread existence of formal organisation. Jennifer Barclay claims that most of the sports played throughout the

colony 'up to the early 1870s were of an "all-in" and sporadic nature played without formality or regulations.' New Zealand 'as a country' was allegedly 'not ready for any formalised organisation of sporting affairs'. She argues that only when life in the colony had become 'far less ... haphazard, spontaneous, and unsettled' were sporting activities conducted on a more systematic basis under 'increasingly strict and elaborate rules', in accordance with practices then evolving in England.<sup>4</sup>

The hypothesis propounded by Barclay does not conform to the reality of the situation which existed in Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. Formally organised sporting activities became part of life in the province almost from the moment at which the Settlement was established. From the mid-1850s a majority of sporting events were carried out under the auspices of committees consisting of officers and members who were elected at public meetings convened especially for that purpose. Each member of these bodies was allocated specific tasks to perform. Great care was taken by every committee to ensure that the funds subscribed by the public to defray the expenses incurred in organising the event for which they were responsible was used judiciously and that, if possible, the gathering returned a profit for reinvestment in the event which was to be held one year hence. Moreover, regattas, rural, Caledonian and Friendly Society sports meetings and, in particular, ploughing matches were usually conducted under quite complex sets of rules which were rigidly enforced by the officials in charge. Formally constituted clubs also featured in some sports from an early stage in their development. The first durable cricket club was established in 1851, the first rowing club in 1862 and the first football club in 1863. These organisations were also governed by elected officers and committees, and functioned according to complicated legislative instruments.

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<sup>4</sup> Barclay, 'An Analysis of Trends in New Zealand Sport From 1840 to 1900', pp.9, 19, 24.

The high degree of formal organisation in sport in Canterbury is easily explained. By the time the settlement of the province was well under way, the viability of the old folk games festivals known as 'wakes', held annually in rural parishes throughout England, had been undermined by the urban drift which occurred during the Industrial Revolution and organised sport played and administered by the middle classes was in the ascendant.<sup>5</sup> The members of the élites and the upper levels of the middling classes in Canterbury were drawn largely from the English middle classes. Consequently, they followed established English middle class practices in organising sporting activities, including the formation of committees, the formulation of rules and careful attention to matters of finance. The prevalence of similar attitudes and practices in the organisation of sports meetings and ploughing matches in rural areas probably derived from the fact that farmers in Canterbury, like their English counterparts, were marketoriented capitalists who applied the methods they used in business to the management of sport.

Another consequence of the domination of sport by the élites and middling classes were the attempts which were occasionally made before the mid-1870s to erect barriers to the participation of men from the working classes. Among the more egregious examples of this tendency were the explicit exclusion of oarsmen engaged in 'bodily labour' from the race for Maxwell's Cup at the Heathcote Regatta in 1872, and the rule introduced by the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club which stipulated that only 'gentlemen' could be admitted to membership. However, the circumstances of colonial life mitigated against attempts to maintain exclusiveness in sport. Canterbury lacked an aristocracy or landed gentry, and the élites and middling classes were not buttressed by generations of success or aristocratic

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<sup>5</sup> R. W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1973, pp.16-20.

connections. Moreover, the liberalism which pervaded colonial life was a formidable weapon against those who sought to construct mechanisms to prevent common people from improving themselves, engaging in activities open to their social superiors or proving themselves in competition against members of all classes.

Control by the *élites* and the middling classes also led to the concept of amateurism being introduced into sport, primarily in rowing and athletics. The earliest definitions adopted were idiosyncratic and parochial, but these were abandoned during the final decades of the nineteenth century as administrators adopted or adapted the definitions of amateurism formulated and enforced in Britain. However, the definitions of an amateur which were eventually composed by the bodies governing the conduct of rowing and athletics throughout the entire colony were considerably less strict than those in force 'at Home'.

Participation in sport was not entirely restricted to the *élites* and middling classes, even during the early years of settlement. Men employed in blue collar vocations competed in rural sports, ploughing matches and, to some extent, in rowing. Thousands of working class spectators attended regattas and athletic sports gatherings. Nevertheless, the involvement of the working classes in sporting activities in Canterbury was limited before 1870. Most labouring men were probably prevented by their long hours of work from becoming involved in any athletic activity other than sporting festivals held on public holidays. The fact that the working classes did compete in these festivals shows that a lack of leisure time was an important impediment to participation in other activities.

Social barriers may also have discouraged working class men from 'intruding' on sports founded and played by members of the *élites* and middling classes. A labourer knew or



at least suspected during the early 1870s that he was not wanted at such overtly élite institutions as the Canterbury Rowing Club or the South Canterbury Amateur Athletic Club, or that he would be rebuffed if he asked to join in a game of football or cricket with a group of old boys of Christ's College. A contrast exists between these club-based activities and athletic sports festivals, in which blue collar workers did compete because participation cost little or nothing and each was avowedly open to all classes.

By the mid-1880s, the involvement of the working classes in sport was beginning to increase. Men engaged in blue collar vocations participated in rowing from the later 1870s through the Cure Boating Club, the Union Rowing Club and, from about 1890, the Avon Rowing Club. Manual workers gained the opportunity to play senior club cricket in Christchurch, under the tutelage of one or two proselytisers from the urban élites, when the Addington Cricket Club was constituted in 1882. The establishment of the Addington, Linwood and, in particular, Sydenham football clubs ensured that a strong working class presence existed in metropolitan rugby by the end of the 1880s.

The growth in the number of sportsmen drawn from blue collar occupational groups was probably facilitated by several factors operating in combination. With the exception of the two amateur athletic clubs in the province and the Canterbury Rowing Club, which retained rules designed to keep out persons considered 'undesirable' by the existing membership, the élites and middling classes abandoned any formal attempts to exclude the 'lower orders' from sport. Informal discrimination probably declined as levels of literacy among the working classes increased, as the property test for the franchise was dropped in 1879, and as George Grey began to court working class votes in the late 1870s and as other politicians followed suit in the late 1880s.

Some of the impetus for this increased rate of participation came from the proletarians themselves. As inter-provincial football and the prestige of the Canterbury representative team grew rapidly after 1880, young working class males willingly joined clubs such as the Sydenham Rugby Football Club. The decision taken by many such individuals to become a footballer rather than a cricketer was probably influenced by the fact that one could more easily obtain a couple of hours away from work to play a game of rugby than a day or more off to play cricket.

However, individuals may have been presented with the option of playing a sport through changes in personal circumstances which were wrought by forces largely beyond their control. The amount of leisure time available to a high proportion of males employed in blue collar occupations probably increased during the 1880s, as the Long Depression prompted a sharp increase in unemployment and underemployment among workers in urban centres.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, some categories of skilled labourers either received a half-holiday by agreement with their employers, or were permitted to increase the number of hours they worked on weekdays in order to obtain a half-holiday on Saturday.<sup>7</sup>

Despite a few attacks on pedestrianism, there was little or no friction between the different sports in Canterbury. They were united by a common devotion to athleticism and it was widely appreciated that they all contributed to the life of the community. Indeed, there was a degree of overlap in the membership of different sporting bodies. In Christchurch, those who involved themselves in the administration of two or more of these sports were W.

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<sup>6</sup> Simkin, C. G. F., *The Instability of a Dependent Economy: Economic Fluctuations in New Zealand, 1840-1914*, Oxford University Press, London, 1951, pp.165-6; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, Christchurch, 1965, pp.60-1.

<sup>7</sup> NZPD, Vol 49, 1884, p.28; Vol 64, 1889, p.224.

H. Wynn-Williams, A. F. N. and C. A. Blakiston, R. J. S. Harman, Peter Cunningham and, after 1880, Frederick Wilding. Outside the ranks of the administrators, there were prominent sportsmen who belonged concurrently to clubs in two or more different sports. They included H. V. Anson, J. F. Wachsmann, Montague Lewin and the Cotterill brothers. This overlapping membership, together with the good will which existed between the different sporting bodies, suggests that the rise of sport was not based on the development of a variety of unrelated sports whose respective adherents shared no common affinity as enthusiasts for sport in general. Indeed, it suggests that the final decades of the nineteenth century saw the tentative emergence of a loosely structured sporting community in Christchurch.

In rural areas, a few prominent local figures were sometimes linked to all significant sporting activities. This was because the number of people available to act as organisers was inevitably limited. Thus, the organisation of both cricket and football in Southbridge initially devolved on J. J. Loe, the prosperous publican. Similarly, the success of the ploughing matches and regattas held annually in Kaiapoi depended heavily on the administrative work undertaken by Dr Charles Dudley and, prior to the mid-1870s, by the Mayor E. G. Kerr. It might be argued that men like Loe, Dudley and Kerr contributed to the emergence of local sporting communities. However, the number of administrators and participants was small and the sports had strong local support and were closely integrated into the life of the wider community. For that reason, it may be more appropriate to say that local sports administrators helped to create, not so much separate communities of sports lovers, but local communities which saw sport as a part of their life.

By the 1890s organised sport was becoming a significant part of provincial life. It was less the preserve of the élites and the middling classes than in former years, and the

provincial rugby team was seen as an important representative of the province as a whole. However, the middling classes remained dominant, and only hints had emerged of the slow but eventually enormous growth in working class participation which occurred during the twentieth century. Women also remained on the margins, integrated into the sporting framework largely as spectators and helpers, while Maori were yet to achieve anything resembling the spectacular if selective success they would enjoy in the Pakeha-administered world of sport in twentieth century New Zealand. As this study has clearly demonstrated, sport was obviously an integral part of the social life of Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. It now remains for other researchers to determine whether sporting activities were of similar significance in any of the other provinces during the early colonial period. Only when several such projects have been completed will a major gap in the historiography of New Zealand have been filled.

## APPENDIX A

### *A NOTE ON SOURCES*

The material arranged in the tables placed at various points throughout this thesis was compiled by consulting a number of sources which contain information relating specifically to the population of Canterbury between 1850 and 1890. This section will discuss the sources used. The process of selecting subjects was relatively straightforward. Initially, lists of the names of those active in a particular sporting activity or organisation during a specific period were compiled from newspapers or other relevant primary sources. Each list was then edited to remove any names for which initials or given names could not be found in a second source. A search of various primary and secondary sources for information on the occupation of each subject was then undertaken on the basis of the revised list.

The range of material containing useful information on sporting activities in Canterbury and those involved therein between 1850 and 1890 is somewhat restricted and all of the sources suffer from shortcomings. Unpublished primary sources generated by those involved in sport in Canterbury before 1890 are scarce. Fire, flood, vermin or negligence have damaged or destroyed the records of most of the clubs, associations and other bodies which were responsible for organising a plethora of sporting activities and events in the Province before 1900. Nevertheless, a few fascinating collections of material remain intact in various repositories and these have proven extremely valuable.

The most important of the published primary sources were local newspapers, from which the great majority of names were taken. The *Lyttelton Times*, which was edited

between 1861 and 1890 by the enthusiastic sportsmen William Reeves and his son William Pember Reeves, proved to be of particular importance. The *Weekly Press*, launched in February 1865, especially for circulation in 'up-country'<sup>1</sup> areas of Canterbury, provided a coverage of athletic sports second only to that found in the columns of the *Lyttelton Times*. Greg Ryan claims that the 'sporting publications' in Canterbury during the colonial era were of a much higher quality than 'those in the North Island - a situation which reflects the greater sporting consciousness of Canterbury'.<sup>2</sup>

Although they must be treated with the same caution as any other source, newspapers generally constitute a rich and reliable source of information on sport and other activities in colonial Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Rollo Arnold states that throughout New Zealand during the colonial period 'Newspapers, local in circulation and outlook, publicized each little community's doings and accomplishments, keeping it well aware of the competing communities in its neighbourhood.'<sup>4</sup> Thus, on balance, the fairly heavy reliance throughout the thesis upon the contents of the various local tabloids was a blessing rather than a hindrance. Nevertheless, the newspapers were not a perfect source. The initials of a significant proportion of individuals involved in sporting events, particularly the activities of cricket, football and rowing clubs, were frequently omitted from the accounts of these affairs which appeared in the press.

Several other primary sources of varying provenance were combed in an attempt to determine the occupations of those who had been included in the lists of participants in

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<sup>1</sup> R. B. O'Neil, *The Press, 1861-1961: The Story of a Newspaper*, Christchurch Press Company Limited, Christchurch, 1963, pp.165, 167.

<sup>2</sup> Ryan, 'Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.16.

<sup>3</sup> A. Pitcaithly, 'The History of Canterbury, New Zealand, 1861-1867' unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1935, pp.163-75.

various sports. The *New Zealand Electoral Rolls* constitute the richest single source of information on the occupations in which the individual inhabitants of the country have been engaged over time. However, because the *Rolls* published between 1860 and 1878 contained no occupational information on registered voters, they were effectively useless. The tables in the text which contain data relating to the period prior to 1879 are not based on sources which are likely to contain information on members of the working classes.

Much of the material which relates to those involved in sport during the years before 1880 was obtained from the unpublished 'Canterbury Dictionary of Biography'. This file system consists of several thousand cards compiled by local historian George Macdonald between the late 1940s and the early 1960s and deposited in the Library of the Canterbury Museum in 1964. However, because the Macdonald Dictionary contains very few biographies of blue collar workers and virtually none of women, its value as an aid in identifying those who participated in organised sport in Canterbury is slightly reduced by an inherent bias toward male members of the élites and middling classes.

One source habitually combed for data was *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, a compendious published work of reference containing industrial, descriptive, historical and biographical facts, figures and information, which was published in six volumes between 1897 and 1908. Each volume was devoted to a particular Province or set of Provinces. Volume III of this set deals exclusively with Canterbury.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps because inclusion in the *Cyclopedia* was by subscription<sup>6</sup> this source was concerned, to a greater extent than any of

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<sup>4</sup> R. Arnold, 'Community in Rural Victorian New Zealand', NZJH, Vol. 24, No.1, April 1990, p.3; Pitcaithly, 'The History of Canterbury', p.172.

<sup>5</sup> *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Volume III: Canterbury*, Cyclopedia Company, Wellington, 1903.

<sup>6</sup> Toynbee, 'Class and Social Structure in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', p.70.

the others consulted in this study, with extolling the achievements of 'local worthies'. Thus, individuals engaged in blue collar occupations seldom appear in its pages.

A number of secondary texts on Colonial Canterbury written by prominent academic and local historians such as W. J. Gardner, W. H. Scotter, L. G. D. Acland and O. A. Gillespie and a number of others also proved to be of some use.<sup>7</sup> However, the emphasis in all of these works is once again upon the actions and lives of prosperous Pakeha males.

Because the sources listed above are 'class-biased' in that they largely exclude working class people, and because the proportion of club members who cannot be identified is often very high, it appears possible that the category of members defined as 'unidentified' prior to 1879 may include disproportionate numbers of manual workers. If this actually proved to be the case, the argument suggesting domination of sporting activity in Canterbury by the elite and middling classes would be rendered very dubious.

However, the validity of the data presented in the various tables relating to the period before 1879 is strongly supported by evidence drawn from the tables created for the years after 1879. The data included in the latter tables are compiled, principally, from *Electoral Rolls* which are based on manhood suffrage and specify the occupation of every registered voter. The *Rolls* published after 1878 enable a researcher to identify large numbers of adult, working class males, and to construct tables which depict the class profile of sports clubs with sufficient accuracy for most purposes. The data presented in these tables show that

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<sup>7</sup> W. J. Gardner, ed., *A History of Canterbury, Volume II: General History, 1854-76, and Cultural Aspects, 1850-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, Christchurch, 1971; W. H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury: Volume III: 1876-1950*, Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee and Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., Christchurch, 1965; L. G. D. Acland, *The Early Canterbury Runs*, Whitcoulls, Christchurch, 1975; O. A. Gillespie, *South Canterbury: A Record of Settlement*, South Canterbury Centennial History Committee, Timaru, 1958; for example G. W. Graham and L. J. B. Chapple, *Ellesmere County: The Land, The Lake, And The People, 1864 - 1964*, Ellesmere County Council, Ellesmere, Canterbury, 1965.



clubs such as the Canterbury R.C. and the Christchurch F.C. which had few or no identifiable members engaged in blue collar occupations before 1879 had, as a matter of demonstrable fact, hardly any such members in 1879-80. Since the factors which facilitated working class participation in sport were increasing in strength, it is only reasonable to conclude that clubs which had few working class members in 1879-80 almost certainly had very few or none during the preceding years. Thus, while the data in the tables relating to the period prior to 1879 have been compiled from sources which are 'class-biased', the picture of minimal working class participation which they convey should still be accepted as correct.

This argument is not intended to convey the impression that the *Rolls* published after 1878 are a perfect, or even an entirely 'socially-neutral', source. Manual workers may have been somewhat under-represented on the *Rolls* compiled between 1879 and 1890, as they were probably more likely to have been politically apathetic or to be itinerants who had not resided in an electorate for a sufficient length of time to qualify as voters. However, the working classes were not alone in experiencing either political apathy or geographical mobility, and any class bias in the *Rolls* is insufficient to prevent the identification of large numbers of workers in organisations in which their presence might reasonably have been anticipated, such as the Trades Athletic Clubs or the Sydenham R.F.C.

Even if manual workers are to some degree under-represented on the *Rolls*, this is unlikely to affect generalisations in the thesis about the dominance of sport by the elites and middling classes. Workers would remain very much in the minority in most clubs even if it was assumed that they were twice as likely as others to be absent from the *Rolls* and their numbers were consequently doubled in any calculation of working class participation in order to compensate.

The thesis contains evidence that in most sports there were numerous youthful competitors who naturally did not appear on the *Electoral Rolls*.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, prospective electors frequently did not register to vote until shortly before the first election held after their twenty-first birthday. Consequently, many active sportsmen may not have appeared on the *Rolls* until they were twenty-three or twenty-four. This phenomenon is a major cause of the failure to identify large numbers of the males involved in sport, and is quite unrelated to any tendency towards under-representation of manual workers in the *Rolls*.

Some difficulties remain in attempting to establish with precision through an examination of the later editions of the *Rolls* the occupations of men involved in sports in Canterbury during the 1880s. The inadequately detailed occupational titles employed therein create considerable difficulties for researchers.<sup>9</sup> For example, it is unclear when an individual is described in the *Rolls* as a 'clerk' whether his actual position at work was merely one rank above the messenger boy in a small office or one step below the manager in a large commercial enterprise. Likewise, the term 'engineer' was apparently applied indiscriminately to professionals trained at Universities in Britain, senior officials serving in technical posts connected with the Railways or Harbour Boards and skilled artisans employed in private or government workshops. This complication notwithstanding, the fact remains that the *Electoral Rolls* are an invaluable source in any attempt to compile accurate tables relating to the period from 1879.

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<sup>8</sup> T. W. Leys, ed., *Brett's Colonists' Guide and Cyclopaedia of Useful Knowledge* [original edition, 1883], Capper Press Reprint, Christchurch, 1980, pp.750-1.

<sup>9</sup> Toynbee, 'Class and Social Structure in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', p.72; members of the wealthy were also engaged in a variety of occupations during their lifetime see 'Patterns and Processes in the Development of Frontier Canterbury, 1850-1890' unpublished PhD Geography thesis, University of Canterbury, 1980, p.177, reproduced in Appendix B of this thesis.

*A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, which was compiled by the Property Tax Department in 1882 and published in 1884, proved to be a useful adjunct. The *Return* provides details regarding the ownership of every section of freehold land in the colony as registered on 31 October 1882. The occupation of each owner is listed, alongside details of the size and value of whatever landed property they held. However, as Greg Ryan has noted, the *Return* 'has only limited application beyond the mid-1880s.'<sup>10</sup>

However, the difficulties of identifying the occupations of individuals at a specific point in time, however, have not been a limiting factor in describing the sporting activities in Colonial Canterbury. This thesis is not limited in scope to the experience in sport of only one race, sex, age group or social class. A plethora of evidence has emerged which clearly shows that people of all ages and backgrounds were involved in various sporting activities, as organisers, competitors or spectators. Consequently, no group has been ignored in this study.

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<sup>10</sup> Ryan, 'Where the Game was Played by Decent Chaps', p.19.

## APPENDIX B

Ellesmere Ploughing Match reports and advertisements from the  
*Lyttelton Times* 1869

1. 13 July 1869
2. 28 July 1869
3. 7 August 1869

# ELLESMERE PLOUGHING MATCH

## LYTTELTON TIMES 1869 (annotated)

3.

### ELLESMERE DISTRICT PLOUGHING MATCH.

The most casual glance at the grain statistics for the past year would convince any one that the Ellesmere district was by long odds the largest agricultural district in the province. Knowing this, we naturally expected great things from them in the particular direction in which our farmers seem to display the greatest amount of energy, namely, the pursuit of ploughing matches. Nor were we disappointed. The Lincoln district matches have long been pre-eminent, and it may now consider itself fairly beaten by its neighbour, for a turn-out of fifty teams is no rare thing in this district that has ever been seen at any match in New Zealand. The Ellesmere farmers have every reason to congratulate themselves upon the success of their endeavours. Many of the teams were very valuable animals, and none were at all approaching "scrubbers." The ground was centrally situated, being old Messrs Dudley and Lawrence's farm, near Leeston. It was not very suitable in other ways, being much too light for the purpose. It was laid out in the very best possible manner, and for a wonder we never heard a word of complaint, which shows that the committee must have been very careful over this matter. (Those who have the management of the Champion Match may with advantage take a lesson from their country confreres in this respect.)

The ground was ploughed in two equal ridges, with a space between each man's work, a plan which taxes the abilities of the ploughman much more severely than the usual system, and leaves each competitor's work distinct from that of his neighbour. The First Class was divided between the wheels and swing ploughs, each having a separate subdivision, and being open to all comers. The Second Class was confined to local teams only, and the Boys' Class followed suit. We have been pleased to notice that at most of our local matches this year, a Boys' class has been opened, and we are glad that in almost every instance, they are made who have been brought up in the plough. Sooon's ploughing in the swing class was very much admired, and although an outsider, no one begrudged him his prize. There were many very excellent pieces of work in the wheel class, and the judges must have been sorely puzzled in giving their awards. They went over the ground many times, and took a great amount of trouble over this class, which took up so much of their time that they were unable to judge the second class that evening. It would have been better had two sets of judges been appointed, so that the night might have been divided. However, the committee hardly expected so large a number of entries, and when the truth became known, it was too late to arrange for more judges. It will be seen that the first and second prizes in the 1st Wheel Class went to outsiders. Robert Nickles, the winner of the first, and Maddison the winner of the second prize, are both Templeton men; and Sooon, the winner in the Swing Class, being a Kaipoi man.

The total number of entries was 53, but three did not put in an appearance. There were a large number of persons on the ground during the day, and towards the conclusion of the match some of them became so much excited that their feelings got the better of their discretion, and a few jovial souls became so warm over the matter, that their words and even waistscoats proved too much of an encumbrance. These obstructions being removed, full play was afforded for the muscular powers, but in almost every case the arms were stronger than the legs, and before night many valiant nucleates lay soundly sleeping on the ground. There is plenty of water about Leeston, but much host appears to be more innocent of its use than many of his brother publicans.

In the evening, a dinner was held at the hotel at Leeston, the Rev W. J. G. Blisset being in the chair. There were upwards of 50 people present; amongst them we noticed the three judges, Messrs Charles Bourne, Dalton, and Duncan; Messrs John Smith, Gardiner, Allington, Gammack, Storey, Rennie, Woodman, Osborne, Williams, Dudley, Lawrence, Cowan, Mawson, Moffett, Coe, Blackler, Woods, Lunn, Maddison, Chamberlain, and others. The dinner was exceedingly well served, and gave general satisfaction. The usual loyal toasts were heartily given, and the Judges, Committee, Secretary (Mr W. D. Lawrence), Chairman, the Successful, the Unsuccessful Candidates, the Strangers, the Police, the Press, each fell in for their share of thanks and good wishes. The prizes were also given away after dinner, a practice which is far more preferable than giving them away in the field. This match was decidedly in all respects the best of the season, and is much creditable to the community who made arrangements, and the district which so thoroughly backed them up. The only objectionable feature that we could see was the "willy willy" which formed part of the music organised by the committee. We feel sure, after this year's experience, their good sense will prevent the repetition of a piece of wanton cruelty of this kind. The following is a list of entries and prize winners:—

The following is a list of the successful competitors:—

FIRST CLASS WHEELS.  
(Open to all comers.)

Ploughman.	Owner.	Maker.
1 R. Nickles	W. Haynes	Hornaby
2 W. Maddison	W. Maddison, jun.	Kestley
3 J. McLauchlan	J. McLauchlan	Kestley
4 John Owens	R. Gillett	Kestley
5 J. O'Grady	W. Boag	Hornaby
6 W. Gray	W. Gray	Hornaby
7 Robert Forge	A. McPhail	Kestley

FIRST CLASS SWINGS.  
(Open to all comers.)

Ploughman.	Owner.	Maker.
1 John Sooon	J. Cunningham	Kestley
2 James Lemon	Dudley and Lawrence	Sellers
3 David Scott	Isaac Mawson	Barrowman

SECOND CLASS (for district).

Ploughman.	Owner.	Maker.
1 W. Wyatt	David Wilson	Hornaby
2 James Carr	R. Early	Kestley
3 R. W. Stewart	John Stewart	Kestley
4 W. Jackson	W. Jackson	Kestley
5 G. Richard	C. Withell	Hornaby

THIRD CLASS (for district—for boys under eighteen).

Ploughman.	Owner.	Maker.
1 Hugh Woods	James Woods	Hornaby
2 A. Reid, jun.	Alex. Reid	Hornaby
3 James Storey	A. Storey	Hornaby

EXTRA PRIZES.

- Given by Mr John Cunningham, for the best fittings and outings on the field—won by David Scott.
- Given by the Committee, for the best ploughed land on the ground—won by R. Nickles.
- A pair of Blinkers, given by Mr Wilson, Saddlers, of Southbridge, for the best ploughed land in the boys' class—won by Hugh Woods.
- A pair of Blinkers, given by Mr Angus, Christchurch, for the best team on the ground—won by Mr William Boag.
- Given by the Committee, for the best groomed team on the ground—won by Mr William Boag. (Confined to the district).
- Given by the Committee, for the best kept harness on the ground—won by Mr William Boag. (Confined to the district).

In the two last cases the judges awarded a second prize to Messrs Dudley and Lawrence.

1.

**ELLESMERE FARMERS' CLUB.** A meeting was held in Lee's Hotel, Leeston, on Friday, July 9, to settle matters in connection with the contemplated ploughing match. Besides the Rev. Mr Blisset, who occupied the chair, there were present Messrs Bridge, Barnett, Mawson, Rennie, Hepworth, Dudley, Lochhead, Woods, Johnston, Bullock, Washbourne, and Lawrence. The ground committee having stated that they had selected from the many pieces offered, a field belonging to Messrs Dudley and Lawrence, of Leeston, kindly placed at the disposal of the club, it was decided that the match should be held therein. The following preliminaries were arranged:—That there should be two classes for swing ploughs, and two for wheels, prizes to be given in each class, and that prizes should be offered to boys under 18, in a separate class; the rules of the match to be in accordance with those of the champion match held near Christchurch last year; the entrance fee to be 10s, and in the boys' class, 5s, but all teams beyond the boundary of the Road Board district, to be charged 20s. The match will take place on August 4, the entries to be sent to the secretary at Lee's Hotel, on or before August 2. The entries must contain the names of the owner of the team, and of the ploughman, the number of the class in which he desires to compete together with the entrance fee.

2.

### ELLESMERE PLOUGHING MATCH.

THIS MATCH will take place on WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1869, on the Farm of

Messrs DUDLEY & LAURENCE, Leeston.

It is proposed to have a Class for Wheeled, and another for Swing Ploughs, on the same footing.

- 1st Class, for Wheeled Ploughs } Open to all Do. for Swing Ploughs } Comers.
- 2nd Class, for Swing or Wheeled Ploughs, confined to the district.

No man who has taken a prize to compete in this class.

3rd Class, for Boys, 18 or under.

### EXTRA PRIZES:—

- For the best Groomed Horses
- For the best kept Harness

All entries to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at Lee's Hotel, Leeston.

No entries will be received after 8 o'clock p.m., on

MONDAY, 2nd AUGUST.

Entries must contain the name of the Owner of the Team, the name of the Ploughman, and the number of the Class in which he desires to compete.

District Ploughman	...	10s.
Boys	...	5s.
Non-residents in district	...	20s.

Rules can be obtained of the Hon. Secretary, on and after August 2, at LOE'S Hotel, Leeston. 7456

## APPENDIX C

Ashburton Annual Athletic Sports reports and advertisements in  
the *Lyttelton Times* 1876

1. 2 November 1876
2. 21 November 1876
3. 22 November 1876
4. 23 November 1876
5. 29 December 1876

# ASHBURTON ANNUAL ATHLETIC SPORTS

## LYTTELTON TIMES 1876

1.

**ASHBURTON ANNUAL ATHLETIC SPORTS.**—An adjourned meeting was held at Quill's Ashburton Hotel on Monday evening; Mr S. M. Cambridge, having been called to the chair. The balance-sheet of last year was read and the Committee was appointed. Mr Büttmann, Secretary, received a vote of thanks for past services, and was re-appointed. A subscription list was then opened, and it was resolved that this year's sports should be held on Boxing Day, Dec. 26. The meeting then adjourned.

2.

**ASHBURTON ANNUAL ATHLETIC SPORTS.**—A meeting was held on Friday evening, Nov. 17, at Quill's Ashburton Hotel. Mr L. M. Cambridge was voted to the chair. A letter was read from Mr S. M. Buchanan, resigning the office of Secretary, and enclosing a donation to the funds. Mr E. Friedlander was duly elected as Secretary. As a question of privilege, Mr Friedlander made a statement totally denying the report circulated by Mr G. Parkin to the effect that he had refused to sell him a ticket for last year's ball. It was resolved that all cheques shall be drawn by the Secretary, and countersigned by the Treasurer. The report of the Sub-committee having been considered, it was resolved that the year's sports should be held at Mr Hay Smith's paddock. It was decided to adopt last year's programme for the present year, exclusive of the dancing, and to advertise the same once in the *Lyttelton Times* and *Press*. It was proposed that the names of Messrs Buchanan, Bullock, and H. E. Smith be added to the Committee. The meeting then adjourned.

3.

SPORTS.

**ASHBURTON ANNUAL ATHLETIC SPORTS,**  
TO BE HELD IN  
MR HAY SMITH'S PADDOCK,  
ON  
BOXING DAY, DEC. 26.  
PROGRAMME.

Quoit Match.  
District Hurdle Race, 440 yards, over 6 flights  
8 ft 6 in hurdles.  
Boys' Hurdle Race, for boys under 16, 440 yards, over 3 ft hurdles.  
Running High Jump.  
Boys' Flat Race, 100 yards, for boys under 16.  
Girls' Flat Race, 100 yards, for girls under 14.  
Standing High Jump.  
Men's Flat Race, 440 yards.  
Girls' Race, 50 yards, for girls under 12.  
Boys' Race, 50 yards, for boys under 12.  
Three-legged Race, 100 yards.  
Long Jump.  
Hop, Step, and Jump.  
Putting the Stone.  
Throwing the Hammer.  
District Flat Race, 440 yards. First prize, a Cup, given by Mr E. W. Shearman, to be won twice out of three times by the same competitor.  
Consolation Race, 200 yards.  
Walking Race, 3 miles.  
Barricade.  
Liberal prizes will be given for each race, which will be published in a future advertisement.  
The Committee reserve the right of making any alteration in the programme they may think necessary.  
1438 HUGO FRIEDLANDER, Hon. Secretary.

4.

**ASHBURTON ANNUAL SPORTS.**—Mr George Parkin writes to Mr. commenting the assertion of Mr Friedlander relating to something Mr Parkin had said about the sale of tickets last year. We publish the substance of Mr Parkin's denial, but cannot undertake to insert any further communications from gentlemen who evidently misunderstand each other.

5.

ASHBURTON.

These sports were held on Boxing day, in a paddock belonging to Mr H. T. Smith, where a large number assembled to witness the various events, nearly all of which were keenly competed. The Ashburton Brass Band was in attendance and added materially to the enjoyment of the occasion. The weather was all that could be desired, and every one appeared to thoroughly enjoy themselves. The sports this year were the best that have been held in this district, and reflected great credit on the Managing Committee, who were most energetic in carrying out the programme successfully. Owing to the liberality of the public, the Committee were enabled to offer fair prizes for competition, leaving a small balance in hand for next year. The following is a list of the prizes and winners:—

Quoit Match—R. Hepburn, first prize, £2; G. Hepburn, second, 15s.  
District Hurdle Race, 440 yds—C. H. Halsey, first prize, £3; G. Vincent, second, £1. H. Freeman was first, but was protested against; protest allowed.  
Boys' Race (Hurdle), 440 yds—H. Winney, first prize, £1; C. Mumery, second, 10s.  
Running High Jump—H. Freeman, first prize, £1 10s; R. Anderson, second, 15s.  
Boys' Flat Race, under 16—C. Mumery, first prize, 15s; H. Winney, second, 7s 6d.  
Girls' Flat Race, under 14—Parrain, first prize, 10s; Steel, second, 5s.  
Standing High Jump—W. Anderson, first prize, £1 10s; J. Stringon and R. Anderson, 15s.  
Flat Race, 100 yds—W. Anderson, first prize, £3; R. Anderson, second, £1.  
Boys' Running High Jump, under 16—L. Mumery, first prize, 15s; J. Jamieson, second, 5s.  
Open Handicap, 1 mile—H. Freeman, first prize, £4; H. Winney, second, £1 10s.  
Pole Vaulting—H. F. Winter, first prize, £3; D. M'Farlane, second, £1.  
Sack Race—H. Pearce, first prize, 15s; Pittman, second, 5s.  
Open Handicap, 440 yards—C. H. Halsey, first prize, £3; R. Anderson, second, £1.  
Girls' Race, under 12—A. Parrain, first prize, 7s 6d; Nelly Sherry, second, 2s 6d.  
Boys' Race, under 12—J. Parrain, first prize, 7s 6d; E. Ford, second, 2s 6d.  
Two-Legged Race, 100 yards—First prize, £1; second, 10s—Brett and Wright, and Anderson and Lockhart. This was a dead heat, and the stakes were divided.  
Long Jump—D. M'Farlane, first prize, £1 10s; Pittman, second, 15s.  
Hop, Step, and Jump—R. Anderson, first prize, £1 10s; W. Anderson, second, 15s.  
Putting the Stone—Ryan, first prize, £1.  
Throwing the Hammer—Ryan, first prize, £1.  
District Flat Race, 440 yards—C. H. Halsey, first; R. Anderson, second.  
Consolation Race, 200 yards—C. C. Fooks, first prize, £1 10s; Hewitt, second. Hunt came in first, but was protested against, the protest being allowed.  
Walking Match Handicap, two miles—Goodwin, first prize, £3; Smith, second, £1.

## APPENDIX D

Kaiapoi Annual Regatta newspaper reports and advertisements  
*Lyttelton Times* 1880.

1. 10 January 1880
2. 8 February 1880
3. 18 February 1880
4. 23 February 1880
5. 1 March 1880
6. 8 March 1880
7. 8 March 1880
8. 17 March 1880
9. 22 March 1880
10. 30 March 1880
11. 3 April 1880
12. 5 April 1880
13. 6 April 1880
14. 7 April 1880
15. 10 May 1880
16. 29 May 1880



# KAIAPOI ANNUAL REGATTA

## LYTTELTON TIMES 1880 (1)

1. **KAIAPOI ANNUAL REGATTA.**—It is intended to call a meeting of persons interested in this event shortly to make the necessary arrangements for holding the Regatta in March as usual. Since the fresh in last June, it has been in capital order for boating, and there are now no shoals or mud flats any part of the way to the swing bridge.

2. **KAIAPOI ANNUAL REGATTA.**—The meeting called for Friday last to consider the advisability of holding the Kaiapoi regatta did not take place, as in consequence of Father Chiniquy's lecture taking place, no one attended at the advertised time except the Commodore (Dr Dudley) and the Secretary and Treasurer. The Commodore will call another meeting shortly, when no doubt the matter will be taken up as warmly as usual.

3. **KAIAPOI REGATTA.**—The first meeting of persons interested in getting up this popular event is advertised to be held on Friday next, at 7.30. It is expected that there will be a large attendance, as great interest has always been shown in the local regatta. Moreover, the river has not been in such good order for pulling for years as at present.

4. **KAIAPOI REGATTA.**—A public meeting of persons interested in getting up this annual event was held in the Council Chamber, Kaiapoi, on Friday last. There was a very large attendance. Dr Dudley, Commodore, in the chair. The Secretary, Mr J. L. Wilson, read the minutes of the last meeting of last year, which were confirmed. He also read a statement of accounts, which showed a deficit due to the Secretary of £4 18s. Mr G. W. Wearing proposed, and Mr W. Burnip seconded—"That the Annual Regatta take place as usual." Mr Moore was quite in favour of holding the Annual Regatta as usual, but he thought it best to see if there was a reasonable chance of obtaining sufficient subscriptions to carry out the event. He would propose as an amendment—"That a Committee consisting of Messrs Wilson, Dudley, Burnip, Wearing and the mover, canvass the town, and report at a meeting to be held on this day week." Mr J. L. Wilson seconded the amendment, as he quite agreed with the remarks made by Mr Moore. On the amendment being put the same number voted for and against, and the Chairman gave his casting vote in favour of the amendment. Mr Moore proposed—"That the usual regatta be held on Wednesday, April 7, if sufficient funds are forthcoming by the next meeting." Mr O. E. Dudley seconded the motion. Mr Wilson proposed as an amendment—"That the date be left open till next meeting." Seconded by Mr Burnip, and on being put to the meeting was carried, only three voting against it. A subscription list was opened, and £22 was raised in the room. The meeting then adjourned till Friday next, at 8 p.m.

5. **KAIAPOI REGATTA.**—The adjourned meeting of persons interested in getting up this annual event was held in the Borough Council Chambers, Kaiapoi, on Friday last; present—Dr Dudley (in the chair), Messrs Pinching, Wearing, J. Winterbourne, Bateman, Thomas, Barnaby, Pearce, A. Clark, O. E. Dudley, A. Winterbourne, Piper, F. Weston, H. Hayman, W. Burnip, J. E. Moore, J. Monk, and W. H. Leach. A telegram was read from Mr J. L. Wilson, apologising for his absence, and stating the amount collected by him. The different subscription lists were handed in, and it was resolved—"That the annual regatta be held on Tuesday, April 6, on which day the tide will be high at 1.50." Mr Burnip proposed and Mr. Pinching seconded—"That Dr Dudley be elected Commodore." Carried. It was resolved—"That Mr Bokeraley be Judge, Mr G. F. Day Starter, Mr J. L. Wilson Secretary and Treasurer, and Messrs W. Burnip, G. W. Wearing, O. E. Dudley, A. T. Clark, H. Thomas, J. H. Moore, B. Moore, W. Bateman, A. Piper, F. Pearce, W. Fraser, C. Smith, W. H. Orsden, B. H. Mathews, G. H. Blackwell, C. Whitford, J. Wilson, W. May, B. Biddle and F. W. Barnaby, as a Committee, with power to add to their number." The meeting adjourned till Friday next, when a programme will be drawn up.

### AQUATIC.

## KAIAPOI REGATTA.

### TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 1880.

**PROGRAMME:**  
11 a.m.—Falling Race, open to all comers; about six miles. First prize, £5; second, £1; entrance, 10s.  
1 p.m.—Junior Pair-oared Race (under 18 years); one and a half miles; open to all members of clubs. First prize, £1; second, £1; entrance, 7s 6d.  
1.30 p.m.—Champion Four-oared Race; three miles up stream; open to all clubs in the colony. First prize, £25; second, £5; entrance, £1.  
2 p.m.—Junior Double-Sculling Race, in stump outriggers; open to all comers; one and a half miles. First prize, £5; second, £1; entrance, 5s.  
2.30 p.m.—Four-oared Sweepstakes Race, of £1 each boat, with £5 added; two miles up stream; open to all members of clubs who have not pulled in any of the foregoing events; one and a half miles up stream.  
3 p.m.—Senior Pair-oared Race; open to all comers; two miles up stream. First prize, £5; second, £1; entrance, 10s.  
3.30 p.m.—Junior Four-oared Race; open to members of clubs under 18 years; one and a half miles up stream. First prize, £5; second, £1; entrance, 10s.  
4 p.m.—Senior Double-Sculling Race, in stump outriggers; open to all comers; two miles. First prize, £5; second, £1; entrance, 10s.  
4.30 p.m.—Four-oared Sweepstakes Race of 10s each boat, with £5 added; open to all members of clubs who have not competed in any of the foregoing events; one and a half miles up stream.  
5 p.m.—Rob Roy Canoe Race; open to all comers; one mile; oval course. First prize, £1; second, £1; entrance, 10s 6d.  
Duck Hunt, Tub and Swimming Races. Post notice.

Two boats, the property of separate clubs, to start or run races. Three boats to start or second prize will be given in any of the events.  
Copies of the rules can be obtained on application.  
Boats not at the start at the time specified shall be liable to be disqualified by the starter.  
Entries close on Friday, April 2, at 7 p.m.  
Persons entering boats must name colours and crews, if possible, and forward cheque for entrance fee before the time stated to the undersigned.  
G. E. DUDLEY.  
Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

## KAIAPOI REGATTA COMMITTEE.

A meeting of this Committee was held in the Council Chamber, Kaiapoi, on Friday; present—Mr W. Burnip (in the chair), Messrs Pottman, Dudley, Clark, Pearce, Piper, and Thomas.

Mr J. L. Wilson said he was greatly obliged for the honour done him in electing him as Secretary and Treasurer, but he must beg to decline, as he could not afford the time.

Mr O. E. Dudley was unanimously elected to the office.

The subscription lists to hand were added up and found to amount to about £74, in addition to which there were several lists not yet to hand.

The Committee then proceeded to draw up a programme as follows:—11 a.m., Sailing Race, six miles; 1 p.m., Junior Pair-oared for youths under eighteen, distance one and a half miles; 1.30 p.m., Champion Four-oared, distance three miles, up stream; open to all comers; 2 p.m., Junior Double Sculls, in stump outriggers, distance one and a half miles; 2.30 p.m., Four-oared Sweepstakes of £1 each boat for crews who have not pulled in the champion race; 3 p.m., Senior Pair-oared, distance two miles, up stream; 3.30 p.m., Junior Four-oared for youths, members of clubs under eighteen, distance 1 1/2 miles; 4 p.m., Senior Double Sculls in stump outriggers, distance 2 miles; 4.30 p.m., Four-oared Sweepstakes race of 10s each boat for men who have not pulled in any of the foregoing events; 5 p.m., Rob Roy Canoe race and duck hunt. Tub races and swimming races were also arranged to be held during the day. Two boats to start or no race, three boats to start or no second prize.  
It was resolved that the time for receiving entries close on Friday, April 2, at 7 p.m.  
Last year's rules were then revised and adopted.

The Secretary was instructed to write to the Manager of the Railway, asking him to allow the boats to be carried free to and from the Regatta, as on previous years. He was also instructed to see what arrangements could be made regarding a band for the Regatta day, and report at next meeting of the Committee.

Mr Clark proposed, "That a Regatta Hall be held on the evening of the day of the Regatta." No one seconded the motion, and it fell to the ground.  
Mr Burnip asked the Committee to give their sanction to a hall to be held in the Oddfellows Hall on the evening of the Regatta, and the Committee assented to the request.

A very cordial vote of thanks was given to the retiring Secretary, Mr J. L. Wilson for the zeal displayed by him during his term of office.

The meeting then adjourned till Friday week at 8 p.m.

8. **KAIAPOI REGATTA.**—In accordance with a resolution passed at the last meeting of the Kaiapoi Regatta Committee, the Secretary applied to the Manager of Railway to allow boats competing at the regatta to be carried free of cost. The following reply has been received:—"In accordance with your request dated March 8, I have the honour to inform you that boats from Christchurch or Lyttelton actually competing at your regatta will be conveyed free of charge providing they are accompanied by a certificate from the Secretary of the regatta that they are bona fide competitors at the regatta meeting. I am, &c., FREDERICK BAXX, General Manager."

# KAIAPOI ANNUAL REGATTA

## LYTTELTON TIMES 1880 (2)

9.

### KAIAPOI REGATTA.

A meeting of this Committee was held at the Borough Council Chamber on Friday evening; present—Messrs Moore (in the chair), Balch, Wearing, Pearce, Bernays, Patten, Thorne, Clark, and C. E. Dudley (Hon Sec and Treasurer).

A letter was read from Mr. F. Back, General Manager of Railways, stating that boats actually competing at the regatta would be carried to and from Kaiapoi free of cost.

Offer to provide a band on the regatta day were received from the local brass band and from the Railway Band.

After some little discussion, it was resolved that the matter of engaging a band be deferred till next meeting; the Secretary to get more definite offer from the local band by that date.

The Secretary pointed out that as Mr. J. L. Wilson had declined to act as Secretary, his name did not appear on the Committee.

It was unanimously resolved—"That Mr. J. L. Wilson be a member of the Committee, also that the Secretary be instructed to pay him the balance due to him for the last year out of the first monies received."

Those present expressed their desire of the energetic way in which Mr. Wilson had always acted in connection with the regatta, and hoped he would follow himself to be put on the Committee.

It was resolved—"That the Secretary write to the Mayor, and ask him to proclaim the day of the regatta a half holiday." "That the meeting adjourn till 8 p.m. on Thursday next, when all members of the Committee having unfavourable dates are requested to bring themselves to the financial position of the Committee may be accurately arrived at." The meeting then adjourned.

10.

KAIAPOI REGATTA COMMITTEE.—This Committee met at the Borough Council Chamber on Saturday last; present—Messrs Moore (chairman), Piper, Patten, Bernays, Burnip, Pearce, Wearing, Balch, Clark, Rakersley, and C. E. Dudley (Secretary and Treasurer). A letter was read from Mr. J. L. Wilson, pointing out that the public meeting did not give power to the Committee to increase the number. The Secretary pointed out that Mr. Wilson was elected Secretary and Treasurer by the public meeting, and as such he was a member of the Committee. Although he had resigned the Secretary and Treasurership, he was still a member of the Committee. All present were of the same opinion. Offers to provide a band were then read from the Kaiapoi Brass Band and the Railway Band, and on the motion of Mr. Piper, seconded by Mr. Balch, the local band's offer was accepted. It was agreed to play when and where required by the Committee, from 11 a.m. till 8 p.m. on the Regatta Day. Resolved—"That the double sculling races be rowed over oval courses." It was also resolved—"That if funds permit, a single sculling race, in double sculls, should be added to the programme." Sub-Committees were appointed to select a suitable site for the band, to lay off the courses, &c., &c., after which the Committee adjourned till 8 p.m. on Friday next, when they will meet to receive entries.

11.

### KAIAPOI REGATTA COMMITTEE.

A meeting of this Committee was held in the Borough Council Chamber last night. Eleven members were present. Mr. E. Moore, in the absence of the Commodore, through illness, was voted to the chair.

It was resolved to give Messrs Petersen and Co.'s cup, and £25, as a prize for a single sculling race in double sculling boats; entries, 7s 6d post; distance, 1½ miles up stream.

Messrs Clark, Bouch, and Fraser, were appointed a Committee to see that the different events were got off at the advertised time.

A letter was read from Mr. J. O. Jones, expressing his regret at not being able to enter for more races, but as the double scull races were to be rowed over oval courses the Canterbury Club could not enter for them, and the age of the juniors also precluded their entering for these events.

The following is the list of entries received for the different events, as read by the Secretary—

#### SAILING RACE.

Mr C. E. Dudley's schooner, Ariel.  
Mr W. Hill's cutter, Lotus.  
Mr J. Roberts' cutter, Lyttelton.

#### JUNIOR FAIR.

Union Rowing Club.

Cure Boating Club.

#### CHAMPION YOUNG.

Cure Boating Club.

Canterbury Rowing Club.

#### JUNIOR DOUBLES SCULL.

Cure Boating Club.

Union Rowing Club.

#### FOUR-OARED SWEEPSTAKE, No. 1.

Union Rowing Club.

Cure Boating Club.

#### SENIOR FAIR.

Canterbury Rowing Club.

Cure Boating Club.

Union Rowing Club.

#### JUNIOR YOUNG.

Cure Boating Club.

Union Rowing Club.

Canterbury Rowing Club.

#### SENIOR DOUBLES SCULL.

Cure Boating Club.

Union Rowing Club.

#### FOUR-OARED SWEEPSTAKE, No. 2.

Union Rowing Club.

Cure Boating Club.

#### SINGLE SCULLING RACE.

Lyttelton Rowing Club.

Cure Boating Club.

Canterbury Rowing Club.

12.

(KAIAPOI REGATTA.)—The boats mentioned in Saturday's issue of this journal as entered by the Lyttelton Boating Club should have read entered by Mr W. Newton, as neither boats or crew belong to the Lyttelton Club.

13.

KAIAPOI REGATTA.—This regatta will be held to-day, commencing at 11 a.m. There will be a half-holiday in Kaiapoi, and the usual regatta hall will be held in the Odd-fellows' Hall in the evening. The C.R.C. boats were sent up on Saturday, and the U.R.C.'s boats were forwarded by road yesterday.

14.

### KAIAPOI REGATTA.

Commodore—Dr Dudley. Judge—Mr W. Rakersley. Starter—Mr G. B. Day. Committee—Messrs J. L. Wilson, W. Burnip, G. W. Wearing, A. T. Clark, M. Thorne, J. H. Moore, R. Moore, W. Patten, A. Piper, F. Pearce, W. Fraser, C. Smith, W. H. Orendon, R. H. Matthews, G. H. Blackwell, O. E. Whitford, J. Wilson, W. H. May, R. A. Balch, E. W. Bernays.

This annual regatta day at Kaiapoi came off yesterday, and as the weather is the main feature of a regatta day it was generally admitted on all hands that it could not be surpassed. The river, according to prediction, was very smooth during the early part of the day, but in the afternoon a north-west wind sprang up, and caused a joggle on the main stream of the Waimakariri which was rather uncomfortable. The tradespeople of the town answered to the Mayor's request by keeping half-holiday, and their employees were in attendance at the regatta. It was noticeable that there was a much smaller attendance than usual, owing probably to the fact that the regatta was held on a Tuesday, that being the market day in the neighbouring town of Rangiora. However, the day was chosen for the sake of the tide, which was more suitable than on any other, as it was full at one o'clock—thus giving the advantage to the best races. The shops and hotels were, as usual, dressed with bunting, and every one present appeared in holiday attire. In a prominent position on Mr. J. Sims' wharf, the Kaiapoi brass band was stationed, and they were very assiduous in their efforts to create amusement. On the ferry reserve there were stationed all the various amusements which usually frequent such gatherings, including the shooting gallery, canary sweeps, &c., and sundry refreshment stalls. The usual wharf, opposite Monk's store, was properly fitted up for a judge's stand, and was reserved for the Committee and their friends. The schooners Haxon and Coupler, lying alongside, afforded ample scope for the youth of the neighbourhood to climb up the rigging, and so gain a good view of everything going on. The officers of the regatta were as usual well to the fore in the performance of their duties, Dr Dudley, with the gun, being well and hearty as usual, and Mr G. Day acting as starter, and giving every satisfaction in that capacity. At an early hour of the day, however, Mr C. E. Dudley was compelled to retire through indisposition, which was much increased by his exertions in the sailing race.

There were ten events on the card, eight of which were fairly contested, and the remaining two were a walk over, in consequence of the Kaiapoi Club not choosing to send a team out. In the Champion Fours and Benjoy there was the greatest excitement and closer rowing than in any other event. In the sailing race the Lyttelton boat got the wind first on its return, and the other two had to tack about up stream to get in at all, owing to a head wind, and when within a couple of chains of the winning post, it was doubtful how the result would be. At the close of the programme a duck hunt was started, and caused a considerable amount of amusement, the duck, J. Pearce, being, however, too good for his opponents. Hayman, to pollard, a swimming match for boys under 18, brought out five competitors, and was won by J. Smith, Rose being a close second. The following was the list of events contested:



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